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# IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS

OF

## Literary Men and Statesmen.

BY WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR, ESQ.

*THE FIRST VOLUME.*

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR TAYLOR AND HESSEY,
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AND 13, WATERLOO-PLACE, PALL MALL.

1824.

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TO

# MAJOR-GENERAL STOPFORD,

ADJUTANT-GENERAL IN THE ARMY OF COLUMBIA.

---

SIR,

THERE may be friends, I feel it, who have never seen each other. In the moment of losing, and perhaps for many years, one of my dearest relatives, I rejoice both in her marriage with you and in the time of it, which presents me the opportunity of adding to my congratulations the inscription of these dialogues.

There never was a period when public spirit was so feeble in England, or political

abilities so rare. Sordid selfishness and frivolous amusement, I will not say, are become the characteristics of our country, but, what is sufficiently calamitous and disgraceful, place it upon a dead level with others. Rising far above and passing far away from them, you have aided in establishing one of those great republics which sprang into existence at the voice of Bolivar, and enjoy for your exertions in the noblest cause the highest distinction any mortal can enjoy, his esteem and confidence.

You will find in these Conversations a great variety of subjects and of style. I have admitted a few little men, such as emperors and ministers of modern cut, to shew better the just proportions of the great; as a painter would place a beggar under a triumphal arch or a camel against a pyramid. The sentiments most often inculcated are those which in themselves

are best; which, even in times disastrous as our own, produced an Epaminondas, a Pelopidas, and a Phocion; and in these, when genius lies flat and fruitless as the sea-sand, a Washington, a Kosciusko, and a Bolivar.

That government beyond a question is the most excellent, which has always been most esteemed by the best and wisest men, and which has produced them in the greatest number.

Exult in your glorious undertaking, and be assured that the work, and the satisfaction at completing it, will be durable.

Yours faithfully,

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

Florence, October, 1822.

# THE PREFACE.

THE peculiarities of some celebrated authors, both in style and sentiment, have been imitated in these dialogues: but where they existed in times long past, to have retained their language would have been inelegant and injudicious. It was requisite to modify in a slight degree even that of so late a period as the reigns of Elizabeth and of James I; a period the most fertile of all in original and vigorous writers.

In the Conversation between Henry IV and Sir Arnold Savage, I have employed such a phraseology as the reader is in part accustomed to, whether from our earlier annalists or from our great dramatic poet.

This, by early habitude, appears more certainly the language of the Plantagenets, than their own would do, copied faithfully, and is attended with no difficulty or disgust.

The only characters known little to the public, of whom no sufficient account is found in the Conversations themselves, are those of the Author, of Sir Arnold Savage, and of Walter Noble.

Sir Arnold Savage was Speaker of the Commons in the second year, and again in the fifth, of Henry IV: and his manly and dignified speech, addressed to that king, is recorded by Hakewil, by Elsynge, and others.

Walter Noble represented the city of Lichfield. He lived familiarly with the principal men of the age, remonstrated with Cromwel on his usurpation of power, and retired from public life on the punishment of Charles.

The memorial of their virtues in these pages is a legacy I hold in trust under them for the benefit of our descendents.

The reader will not be surprised at finding in these dialogues a great diversity of opinions. He is requested to attribute none of them to the author of the work, as proceeding from his conviction or persuasion, but to consider that they have risen and fallen in different periods and emergencies; and he is invited to turn to the more eminent writers of antiquity, where such are introduced, and to compare their sentiments with those before him. If, after all, he should experience an evil or unpleasant impression, let him throw aside first these volumes, as the lightest; then Cicero, Demosthenes, and every one else whose political notions, so discordant from those now prevalent, are represented in them; and strengthen his mind, and correct both his style and judgement, by a careful

perusal of the speeches which have happily come down to us, from the more enlightened and prudent leaders of our parliament, Mr. Pitt, Lord Castlereagh, and their successors, whose rank and influence have ensured to them the promises of immortality.

What is excellent in one government may not be advisable in another; and what is advisable in that other may not appear so to those who direct its affairs. Hence the ideas of Washington and Franklin are represented as very much at variance with the ideas of those statesmen in France, Britain, Prussia, Russia, who declare themselves much wiser, much more dispassionate, much more disinterested. Hence also the opinions of the ruder Spaniards are extremely unfavorable to a House of Peers, and somewhat irreverent to that of England. Here however it must be protested, that nothing of this irre-

verence should be attributed to the writer; whose business is to examine the most interesting and important questions, by the introduction of personages in some cases the most zealous and enthusiastic, in others the least prejudiced and preoccupied. This method presents occasionally somewhat like dramatic interest, and, where that is deficient or inadmissible, historical facts, biographical characteristics, critical disquisitions, philological observations, and philosophical truths or problems.

Above all things, the reader is exhorted to observe religiously our laws and customs, and to receive as curiosities, not as directions, the things, whatever they may be, which men educated in other countries and with other feelings, may, in the heat of discussion or in the unskilfulness of argument, oppose to them.

Wherever ground is dug for any purpose, there spring up plants of various

kinds, from that purpose altogether alien; most of them are thrown away, a few collected: thus I, occupying my mind in enquiries and speculations which may amuse my decline of life, and shew to others the features of the times in which we live and have been living, at one moment write for business, at another for relaxation, turn over many books, lay open many facts, and gather many fancies which I must relinquish on the road. Should health and peace of mind remain to me, and the enjoyment of a country, where, if there is none to assist, at least there is none to molest me, I hope to leave behind me completed the great object of my studies, an orderly and solid work in history, and I cherish the persuasion that Posterity will not confound me with the Coxes and Foxes of the age.

# IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS

IN

# THE FIRST VOLUME.

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# CONVERSATION I.

## RICHARD I

AND THE

## ABBOT OF BOXLEY.

# RICHARD I.

AND THE

# ABBOT OF BOXLEY.

---

The abbot of Boxley was on his road to Haguenau in search of Richard, when he perceived a tall pilgrim at a distance, and observed him waving his staff toward some soldiers who would have advanced before him. They drew back.

"He may know something of Cœur de Lion," said the abbot, and spurred his horse on. In an instant he threw himself at the pilgrim's feet, who embraced him affectionately.

ABBOT.

O my king! my king! the champion of our faith at the mercy of a prince unworthy to hold his stirrup! the conqueror of Palestine led forth on foot! a captive, and to those he commanded and protected! Could Saladin see this...

RICHARD.

The only prince in the universe, who would draw his sword for me against the ruffian of Austria. He alone is worthy to rescue me, who hath proved himself worthy to fight me.

I might have foreseen this result. What sentiment of glory, of magnanimity, of honour, of gratitude, of humanity, ever warmed an Austrian bosom?

Tell me, declare to me, abbot, speak out at once ... is this the worst of my misfortunes? Groans burst from me; they cleave my heart; my own English, I hear, have forsaken me: my brother John is preferred to me... I am lost indeed. What nation has ever witnessed such a succession of brave monarchs, for two hundred years together, as have reigned uninterruptedly in England? Example formed them, danger nurtured them, difficulty instructed them, peace and war, in an equal degree, were the supporters of their throne. If John succeed to me, which he never can by virtue, never shall by force, and I pray to God never may by fortune—what will remain to our country but the bitter recollection of her extinguished glory? I would not be regretted at so high a price. I would be better than the gone, presumptuous as is

the hope; but may the coming be better than I! Abbot, I have given away thrones, but never shall they be torn from me: rather than this, a king of England shall bend before an emperor of Germany*; but shall bend as an oak before the pass-

* Opinions have changed upon all things, and greatly upon titles and dignities. Who has not seen a consul appointed to reside in a fishing town? Who has not given a shilling to a marquis, a sixpence to a knight? A Roman senator was beneath the level of an English gentleman; yet not only a Roman senator, but a Roman citizen, held himself superior to foreign kings. Surely it might well be permitted our Richard to assume a rank far above any potentate of his age. If almanacks and German court-calendars are to decide on dignities, the emperors of Morocco, of Austria, and, since last August, of Mexico, should precede the kings of England and France: but learned men have thought otherwise. On this subject I shall transcribe a few sentences from Leonard Aretine.

"Quid enim mea refert quemadmodum barbari loquantur, quos neque corrigere possum, si velim, neque magnopere velim si possim? De rege tamen et imperatore idem sentio quod tu, et jampridem ridens barbariem istam, hoc ipsum notavi atque redargui. Tres enim gradus majorum dignitatum apud Romanos, de quorum principe loquimur, fuere: rex, dictator, imperator. Ex his suprema omnium potestas rex est; post regem verò secundum tenuit dignitatis locum dictatura; post dictaturam imperium *tertio gradu* consequitur. Hujusce rei probatio est, quod Octaviano imperatori optime se gerenti Senatus Populusque Romanus dignitatem augere, pro imperatore dictatorem facere decrevit, quod ille non recepit, sed flexo genu recusavit, quasi majoris statûs majorisque invidiæ dignitatem existimans, Imperatoris nomen modicum ac populare, si ad Dictatoris fastigium comparetur. Majorem vero esse regiam potestatem quam dictaturam ex eo potest intelligi, quia

ing wind, only to rise up again in all his majesty and strength.

ABBOT.

God grant it! Abandoning a king like Richard, we abandon our fathers and children, our inheritance and name. Far from us be for ever such ignominy! May the day when we become the second people upon earth, Almighty God! be the day of our utter extirpation!

Julius Cæsar, Dictator cum esset, affectavit Regem fieri." Epist ix. lib. vi.

Many acute arguments follow. The dignity of a sovran does not depend on the title he possesses; for that he may with equal arrogance and indiscretion assume; but on the valour, the power, the wealth, the civilization of those he governs. This is a view of the subject which Aretine has not taken, and which undoubtedly Richard took.

Rank, which pretends to fix the value of every one, is the most arbitrary of all things. A Roman knight, hardly the equal of our secondary gentlemen, would have disdained to be considered as no better or more respectable than a foren king. In our days, even an adventurer to whom a petty prince or his valet has given a pennyworth of ribbon, looks proudly and disdainfully on any one of us who has nothing more in his button-hole than the button.

There are few writers more sensible than Plutarch; and no remark of his appears to me more judicious than the following on Juba; at which however there is not a deputy commissary or under secretary who would not laugh heartily.

" His son, whose name also was Juba, was carried in triumph while yet a child: and truly most happy was his imprisonment; by which, barbarian as he was, he came to be numbered amongst the most learned writers."

RICHARD.

I cease not to be king, who rule over hearts like thine.

ABBOT.

Here are hardly, I reckon, more than threescore men; and, considering the character both of their prince and of their race, I cannot but believe that the scrip across my saddlebow contains a full receit for the discharge of my sovran. Certain I am that little is left unto him of the prize that he made from the caravan of Egypt.

RICHARD.

The only prizes worthy of Richard were Saladin and Jerusalem. I divided the gold and silver among my soldiers. I have no hesitation in esteeming Saladin not only above all the kings and potentates now living, which of a truth is little, but above all who have ever reigned; such is his wisdom, his courage, his humanity, his courtesy, his fidelity; and I acknowledge, that if I had remained to conquer him, I would have restored to him all his dominions, excepting Palestine. And the crown of Palestine which of the crusaders should wear? which among them could have worne it one year? I would do nothing in vain; no, not even for glory. The Christian princes judged of me from their own worthlessness: Saladin judged of me

from himself. To them he sent pearls and precious stones, to me figs and dates; and I resolved from that moment to contend with him and to love him. Look now towards the Holy Alliance. Philip swore upon the Evangelists to abstain from all aggression in my absence. He invades Normandy and sanctions usurpation. Saladin was defeated and Jerusalem would have fallen; but God will forgive me if I preferred my throne to his sepulchre, my people to his persecutors, and if I chastise a disloyal rather than a loyal enemy.

ABBOT.

I wish my liege could have taken him prisoner, that he might have saved such a soul by infusing into it the true faith under baptism.

RICHARD.

Ay, that indeed were well: but Saladin lives in a country where prophet comes after prophet, and each treads out the last vestige from the sand. I am afraid it would not hold.

ABBOT.

Better as it is then.

RICHARD.

There are many in foren parts, who cannot be brought to comprehend, how a sprinkle of water should prepare a man's eternal happiness, or the curtailment of a cuticle his eternal misery.

ABBOT.

Alas, my liege, society is froth above and dregs below, and we have much ado to keep the middle of it sweet and sound; much ado to communicate right reason and to preserve right feelings. In voyages you may see too much, and learn too little. The winds and the waves throw about you their mutability and their turbulence. We lose much when we lose sight of home; more than ever schoolboy wept for.

RICHARD.

I discover, my good abbot, that you have watched and traced me from the beginning of my wanderings. I sailed along the realms of my family: on the right was England, on the left was France: little else could I discover than sterile eminences and extensive shoals. They fled behind me: so pass away generations; so shift, and sink, and die away affections. In the wide ocean I was little of a king: old men guided me, boys instructed me; these taught me the names of my towns and harbours, those showed me the extent of my dominions. One cloud that dissolved in one hour half covered them.

I debark on Sicily. I place my hand upon the throne of Tancred, and fix it. I sail again, and within a day or two behold, as the sun is setting,

the solitary majesty of Crete, mother of a religion, it is said, that lived two thousand years. Onward, and many bright specks bubble up along the blue Ægean; islands, every one of which, if the songs and stories of the pilots are true, is the monument of a greater man than I am. I leave them all afar off... and for whom? O abbot, to join creatures of less import than the sea-mews on their cliffs; men praying to be heard, and fearing to be understood, ambitious of another's power in the midst of penitence, avaricious of another's wealth under vows of poverty, and jealous of another's glory in the service of their God. Is this Christianity? and is Saladin to be damned if he despises it?

The king or emperor of Cyprus* (I forget his title) threw into prison the crew of an English vessel wrecked on his coast; and, not contented with this inhumanity, forbade the princess of Navarre my spouse, and the queen of Sicily who attended her, to take refuge from the tempest in any of his ports. I conquered his island, with the loss, on my part, of a dinner, two men, and a bridle. He was brought before me. My emperor had an aversion to iron in every form. I adorned his imperial feet with a silver chain, and invited him to the festivi-

* Isaac the usurper of Cyprus styled himself emperor.

ties of my nuptials with Berengere, followed by her coronation as queen of Cyprus. We placed his daughter under the protection of Jane*, knowing her sweet temper and courtesy, and remembering that a lady of rank rises one step higher by misfortune. She has exchanged the cares of a crown for the gaiety of a court, and I hope that what she lost as princess she will gain as woman. I intend to place her suitably in marriage, and her dowry shall be what my treasury is at the time.

ABBOT.

We have only to consider now what lies before us. Could not my liege have treated with the duke of Austria?

RICHARD.

Yes, had he been more nearly my equal. I punished his neglect of discipline: it became in his power to indulge his revenge. Henry is mercenary in the same degree, but perhaps less perfidious, certainly less irritated and hostile. No potentate can forgive the superiority of England: none can forget that I treated him as a trooper and dependent: none can conceal from himself that the features of my contempt were too broad for any mask in all the rich wardrobe of dissimulation. Henry alone is capable of securing my

* Queen of Sicily.

return. I remember the fate of Robert; and if I am not presently in London, I may be in Cardiff. He spoke wisely who said, *There is no confidence in princes;* and he will speak not unwisely, who shall say, *There is none for them.*

Those who have abandoned me shall ransom me: I myself will dictate the conditions, and they shall be such as no emperor of Germany can refuse.

Come on with me.

# CONVERSATION II.

## THE LORD BROOKE

AND

## SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

# THE LORD BROOKE

AND

# SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

---

BROOKE.

I COME again unto the woods and unto the wilds of Penshurst, whither my heart and the friend of my heart have long invited me.

SIDNEY.

Welcome, welcome! And now, Greville, seat yourself under this oak; since, if you had hungered or thirsted from your journey, you would have renewed the alacrity of your old servants in the hall.

BROOKE.

In truth I did so; for no otherwise the good household would have it. The birds met me first, affrightened by the tossing up of caps, and I knew by these harbingers, who were coming. When my palfrey eyed them askance for their clamorousness, and shrank somewhat back, they quarreled with

him almost before they saluted me, and asked him many pert questions. What a pleasant spot, Sidney, have you chosen here for meditation! a solitude is the audience-chamber of God... Few days, very few in our year, are like this: there is a fresh pleasure in every fresh posture of the limbs, in every turn the eye takes.

> Youth, credulous of happiness, throw down
> Upon this turf thy wallet, stored and swoln
> With morrow-morns, bird-eggs, and bladders burst,
> That tires thee with its wagging to and fro:
> Thou too wouldst breathe more freely for it, Age,
> Who lackest heart to laugh at life's deceit.

It sometimes requires a stout push, and sometimes a sudden resistence, in the wisest men, not to become for a moment the most foolish. What have I done! I have fairly challenged you, so much my master.

SIDNEY.

You have warmed me: I must cool a little and watch my opportunity. So now, Greville, return you to your invitations, and I will clear the ground for the company: Youth, Age, and whatever comes between, with all their kindred and dependencies. Verily we need few taunts or expostulations; for in the country we have few vices, and consequently few repinings. I take especial care that my young

labourers and farmers shall never be idle, and supply them with bows and arrows, with bowls and ninepins, for their Sunday-evening, lest they should wench, drink, and quarrel. In church they are taught to love God; after church they are practised to love their neighbour; for business on workdays keeps them apart and scattered, and on market-days they are prone to a rivalry bordering on malice, as competitors for custom. Goodness does not more certainly make men happy, than happiness makes them good. We must distinguish between felicity and prosperity: for prosperity leads often to ambition, and ambition to disappointment: the course is then over; the wheel turns round but once; while the re-action of goodness and happiness is perpetual.

BROOKE.

You reason justly and you act rightly. Piety, warm, soft, and passive, as the æther round the throne of Grace, is made callous and inactive by kneeling too much: her vitality faints under rigorous and wearisome observances. A forced match between a man and his religion sours his temper and leaves a barren bed.

SIDNEY.

Desire of lucre, the worst and most general country vice, arises here from the necessity of

looking to small gains. It is the tartar that encrusts economy.

... Avarice
Grudges the gamesome river-fish its food,
And shuts his heart against his own life's blood.

BROOKE.

O that any thing so monstrous should exist in this profusion and prodigality of blessings! The herbs are crisp and elastic with health; they are warm under my hand, as if their veins were filled with such a fluid as ours. What a hum of satisfaction in God's creatures! How is it, Sidney, the smallest do seem the happiest?

SIDNEY.

Compensation for their weaknesses and their fears; compensation for the shortness of their existence. Their spirits mount upon the sunbeam above the eagle: they have more enjoyment in their one summer than the elephant in his century.

BROOKE.

Are not also the little and lowly in our species the most happy?

SIDNEY.

I would not willingly try nor overcuriously examine it. We, Greville, are happy in these parks and forests: we were happy in my close winter-walk of box and laurustinus and mezereon.

In our earlier days did we not emboss our bosoms with the crocusses, and shake them almost unto shedding with our transports! Ah my friend, there is a greater difference, both in the stages of life and in the seasons of the year, than in the conditions of men: yet the healthy pass through the seasons, from the clement to the inclement, not only unreluctantly, but rejoicingly, knowing that the worst will soon finish and the best begin anew; and we are all desirous of pushing forward into every stage of life, excepting that alone which ought reasonably to allure us most, as opening to us the *Via Sacra*, along which we move in triumph to our eternal country. We may in some measure frame our minds for the reception of happiness, for more or for less; but we should well consider to what port we are steering in search of it, and that even in the richest we shall find but a circumscribed, and very exhaustible quantity. There is a sickliness in the firmest of us, which induces us to change our side, though reposing ever so softly; yet, wittingly or unwittingly, we turn again soon into our old position. God hath granted unto both of us hearts easily contented; hearts fitted for every station, because fitted for every duty. What appears the dullest may contribute most to our genius: what is most gloomy may soften the

seeds and relax the fibres of gaiety. Sometimes we are insensible to its kindlier influence, sometimes not. We enjoy the solemnity of the spreading oak above us: perhaps we owe to it in part the mood of our minds at this instant: perhaps an inanimate thing supplies me, while I am speaking, with all I possess of animation. Do you imagine that any contest of shepherds can afford them the same pleasure as I receive from the description of it; or that even in their loves, however innocent and faithful, they are so free from anxiety as I am while I celebrate them? The exertion of intellectual power, of fancy and imagination, keeps from us greatly more than their wretchedness, and affords us greatly more than their enjoyment. We are motes in the midst of generations: we have our sunbeams to circuit and climb. Look at the summits of all the trees around us, how they move, and the loftiest the most so: nothing is at rest within the compass of our view, except the grey moss on the park-pales. Let it eat away the dead oak, but let it not be compared with the living one.

Poets are nearly all prone to melancholy; yet the most plaintive ditty has imparted a fuller joy, and of longer duration, to its composer, than the conquest of Persia to the Macedonian. A bottle

of wine bringeth as much pleasure as the acquisition of a kingdom, and not unlike it in kind: the senses in both cases are confused and perverted.

BROOKE.

Merciful heaven! and for the fruition of an hour's drunkenness, from which they must awaken with heaviness, pain, and terror, men consume a whole crop of their kind at one harvest-home. Shame upon those light ones who carol at the feast of blood! and worse upon those graver ones who nail upon their escutcheon the name of great. God sometimes sends a famine, sometimes a pestilence, and sometimes a hero, for the chastisement of mankind; none of them surely for their admiration. Only some cause like unto that which is now scattering the mental fog of the Netherlands, and is preparing them for the fruits of freedom, can justify us in drawing the sword abroad...

SIDNEY.

And only the accomplishment of our purpose can authorise us again to sheathe it: for, the aggrandisement of our neighbours is nought of detriment to us; on the contrary, if we are honest and industrious, his wealth is ours. We have nothing to dread while our laws are equitable and our impositions light: but children fly from mothers that strip and scourge them. We are come

to an age when we ought to read and speak loudly what our discretion tells us is fit: we are not to be set in a corner for mockery and derision, with our hands hanging down motionless and our pockets turned inside-out. Let us congratulate our country on her freedom from debt, and on the economy and disinterestedness of her administrators; men altogether of eminent worth, afraid of nothing but of deviating from the broad and beaten path of illustrious ancestors, and propagating her glory in far-distant countries, not by the loquacity of mountebanks or the audacity of buffoons, nor by covering a tarnished sword-knot with a trim shoulder-knot, but by the mission of right learned, grave, and eloquent ambassadors. Triumphantly and disdainfully may you point to others.

1.

While the young blossom starts to light,
And heaven looks down serenely bright
On Nature's graceful form;
While hills and vales and woods are gay,
And village voices all breathe May,
Who dreads the future storm?

2.

When princes smile and senates bend,
What mortal e'er foresaw his end
Or fear'd the frown of God?
Yet has the tempest swept them off,
And the opprest, with bitter scoff,
Their silent marble trod.

3.

To swell their pride, to quench their ire,
Did venerable Laws expire
And sterner forms arise;
Faith in their presence veil'd her head,
Patience and Charity were dead,
And Hope.. beyond the skies.

But away, away with politics: let not this city-stench infect our fresh country-air.

BROOKE.

To happiness then, and unhappiness, since we can discourse upon it without emotion. Our unhappiness appears to be more often sought by us, and pursued more steddily than our happiness. What courtier on the one side, what man of genius on the other, has not complained of unworthiness preferred to worth? Who prefers it? his friend? no. his self? no. surely. Why then grieve at folly or injustice in those who have no concern in him, and in whom he has no concern? We are indignant at the sufferings of those who bear bravely and undeservedly; but a single cry from them breaks the charm that bound them to us.

SIDNEY.

The English character stands high above complaining. I have heard the French soldier scream at receiving a wound; I never heard ours: shall the uneducated be worthy of setting an example

to the lettered? If we see, as we have seen, young persons of some promise, but in comparison to us as the colt is to the courser, raised to trust and eminence by any powerful advocate, is it not enough to feel ourselves the stronger men, without exposing our limbs to the passenger, and begging him in proof to handle our muscles? Only one subject of sorrow, none of complaint, in respect to court, is just and reasonable; namely, to be rejected or overlooked when our exertions or experience might benefit our country. Forbidden to unite our glory with hers, let us cherish it at home the more fondly for its disappointment, and give her reason to say afterwards, she could have wished the union.

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The lord Brooke introduced here is less generally known than the illustrious personage with whom he converses, and upon whose friendship he had the virtue and good sense to found his chief distinction. On his monument in St. Mary's at Warwick, written by himself, we read that he was the servant of Queen Elizabeth, the counsellor of King James and the friend of Sir Philip Sidney. His style is rather stiff, but his sentiments are sound and manly, his reflections deep. The same family produced another eminent man, slain in the civil wars by a shot from Lichfield minster.

This conversation was longer. As the speakers were passionately fond of poetry, more was introduced: among the sections

cancelled was the following, in which perhaps the verses may, to some readers, not be unacceptable.

BROOKE.

To happiness then and unhappiness, since we can discourse upon it without emotion: but first I would rather hear a few more verses; for a small draught increases the thirst of the very thirsty.

SIDNEY.

To write as the ancients have written, without borrowing a thought or expression from them, is the most difficult and the most excellent thing we can atchieve in poetry. I attempt no composition which I believe will occupy more than an hour or two, so that I can hardly claim any rank among the poets, but having once collected from curiosity all the *invocations to sleep*, ancient and modern, I fancied it possible to compose one differently; which, if you consider the simplicity of the subject and the number of those who have treated it, may appear no easy matter.

Sleep! who contractest the waste realms of night,
None like the wretched can extoll thy powers:
We think of thee when thou art far away,
We hold thee dearer than the light of day,
And most when Love forsakes us wish thee ours...
O hither bend thy flight!
Silent and welcome as the blessed shade
Alcestis, to the dark Thessalian hall,
When Hercules and Death and Hell obeyed
Her husband's desolate despondent call.
What fiend would persecute thee, gentle Sleep,
Or beckon thee away from man's distress?
Needless it were to warn thee of the stings
That pierce my pillow, now those waxen wings
Which bore me to the sun of happiness,
Have dropt into the deep.

BROOKE.

If I cannot compliment you, as I lately complimented a poet

on the same subject, by saying "*May all the gods and goddesses be as propitious to your invocation,*" let me at least congratulate you that all here is fiction.

SIDNEY.

How many, who have abandoned for public life the studies of philosophy and poetry, may be compared to brooks and rivers, which in the beginning of their course have assuaged our thirst, and have invited us to tranquillity by their bright resemblance of it, and which afterwards partake the nature of that vast body into which they run, its dreariness, its bitterness, its foam, its storms, its everlasting noise and commotion! I have known several such, and when I have innocently smiled at them, their countenances seemed to say, "*I wish I could despise you: but alas! I am a runaway slave, and from the best of mistresses to the worst of masters; I serve at a tavern where every hour is dinner-time, and pick a bone upon a silver dish.*" And what is acquired by the more fortunate amongst them? they may put on a robe and use a designation which I have no right to: my cook and footman may do the same: one has a white apron, the other has red hose; I should be quite as much laughed at if I assumed them. A sense of inferior ability is painful: that I feel most at home: I could not do nearly so well what my domestics do; what the others do I could do better. My blushes are not at the superiority I have given myself, but at the comparison I must go through to give it.

# CONVERSATION III.

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## KING HENRY IV

AND

## SIR ARNOLD SAVAGE.

# KING HENRY IV

AND

# SIR ARNOLD SAVAGE.

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SAVAGE.

I OBEY the commands of my liege.

HENRY.

'Tis well: thou appearest more civil and courteous, Sir Arnold Savage, than this morning in another place, when thou declared'st unto me, as speaker of the Commons, that no subsidy should be granted me until every cause of public grievance was removed*.

SAVAGE.

I am now in the house of the greatest man upon earth; I was then in the house of the greatest nation.

* Such are the words reported by Hakewill de modo tenendi Parl.

HENRY.

Marry! thou speakest rightly upon both points; but the latter, I swear unto thee, pleaseth me most. And now, Savage, I do tell thee with like frankness, I had well-nigh sent a score of halberts among your worshipful knights and sleek wool-staplers, for I was sore chafed, and, if another had dealt with me in such wise, I should have straitway followed mine inclination. Thou knowest I am grievously lett and hindered in my projected wars, by such obstinacy and undutifulness in my people. I raised them up from nothingness four years ago, and placed them in opposition to my barons, in trust that, by the blessing of God and his saints, I might be less hampered in my conquest of France. This is monsterous: Parliament speaks too plainly and steps too stoutly for a creature of four years growth.

SAVAGE.

God forbid that any king of England should atchieve the conquest of all France. Patience, my liege and lord! Our Norman ancestors, the most warlike people upon whose banners the morning sun ever lighted, have wrested the sceptre from her swadling kings, and, pushing them back on their cushions and cupboards, have been contented with the seizure of their best and largest provinces.

The possession of more serfs would have tempted them to sit down in idleness, and no piece of unbroken turf would have been left, for the playground of their children in arms. William the Conqueror, the most puissant of knights and the wisest of statesmen, thought fit to set open a new career, lest the pride of his chevalry should be troublesome to him at home. He led them forth against the brave and good Harold, whose armies had bled profusely, in their wars against the Scot. Pity that such blood as the Saxon should ever have been spilt*! but hence are the titledeeds to our lands and tenements, the perpetuity of our power and dominion.

HENRY.

To preserve them from jeopardy, I must have silver in store; I must have horses and armour, and wherewith to satisfy the cravings of the soldier, always sharp, and sharpest of all after fighting.

SAVAGE.

My liege must also have other things, which escaped his recollection.

HENRY.

Store of hides, and of the creatures that were within them; store of bacon, store of oats and

* The Danes under Harold were not numerous, and there were few vestiges of the Britons out of Wales and Cornwall.

barley, of rye and good wheaten corn; hemp, shipping, masts, anchors; pinetree and its piche from the Norwegian, yewtree from Corse and Dalmat. Divers other commodities must be procured from the ruler of the Adriatic, from him who never was infant nor stripling, whom God took by the righthand, and taught to walk by himself the first hour. Moreover I must have instruments of mine own device, weighty, and exceeding costly; such as machinery for beating down walls. Nothing of these hath escaped my knowledge or memory, but the recital of some befits a butler or sutler or armourer, better than a king.

SAVAGE.

And yet methinks, sir, there are others which you might have mentioned and have not, the recital of which would befitt a king, rather than sutler, butler, or armourer: they are indeed the very best and most necessary things in the world to batter down your enemy's walls with.

HENRY.

What may they be? you must find them.

SAVAGE.

You have found them, and must keep them... they are the hearts of your subjects. Your horse will not gallop far without them, though you

empty into his manger all the garners of Surrey. Wars are requisite, to diminish the power of your Baronage, by keeping it long and widely separate from the main body of retainers, and under the ken of a stern and steddy prince, watching the movements of all, curbing their discourses, and inuring them to regular and sharp discipline. In general they are the worthless, exalted by the weak, and dangerous from wealth ill acquired and worse expended. The whole people is a good king's household, quiet and orderly when well treated, and ever in readiness to defend him against the malice of the disappointed, the perfidy of the ungrateful, and the usurpation of the familiar. Act in such guise, most glorious Henry, that the king may say *my* people, and the people say *our* king: I then will promise you more, passing all comparison and computation, than I refused you this morning; the enjoyment of a conquest, to which all France in estimation is as a broken flag-staff. A Norman by descent and an Englishman by feeling, the humiliation of France is requisite to my sense even of quiet enjoyment. Nevertheless I cannot delude my understanding, on which is impressed this truth, namely, that the condition of a people which hath made many conquests, doth ultimately become worse than that of the con-

quered. For, the conquered have no longer to endure the sufferings of weakness or the struggles of strength, and some advantages are usually holden forth to keep them peaceable and contented: but under a conquering prince the people are shadows, which lessen and lessen as he mounts in glory, until at last they become, if I may reasonably say so and unreprovedly, a thing of nothing, a shapeless form.

HENRY.

Faith! I could find it in my heart, sir Arnold, to clip thine eagle's claws and perch thee somewhere in the peerage.

SAVAGE.

Measureless is the distance between my liege and me; but I occupy the second rank among men now living, forasmuchas, under the guidance of Almighty God, the most discreet and courageous have appointed me, unworthy as I am, to be the great comprehensive symbol of the English people.

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Writers differ on the first Speakers of the House of Commons, for want rather of reflection than of inquiry. The Saxons had frequently such chiefs; not always. In the reign of William Rufus there was a great council of parliament at Rockingham, as may be seen in the history of Eadmerus: his words

are *totius regni adunatio*. He reports that a certain *knight* came forth and stood before the *people*, and spoke in the name and in the behalf of all. Peter de Montfort in the reign of Henry III spoke *vice totius communitatis, and consented* to the banishment of Ademar de Valence, bishop of Winchester. A sir John Bushey was the first presented by the Commons to the King in full parliament. Elsynge calls him "a special minion" to Richard II. It appears that he, like all his predecessors, was chosen for one particular speech, purpose, or sitting.

Sir Arnold Savage, according to Elsynge, "was the first who appears *upon any record*" to have been appointed to the dignity as now constituted.

The business on which my dialogue is founded, may be described by an extract from Rapin.

"Le roi, ayant rappresentè a ce parlement le besoin qu'il avoit d'un secours extraordinaire, les Communes allèrent en corps lui presenter une Adresse, dans laquelle elles lui remontroient que, sans fouler son peuple, il pouvoit subvenir a ses besoins. Elles exposoient que le clergè possedoit la troisieme partie des biens du royaume, et que, ne rendant au roi aucun service personel, il etoit juste qu'il contribuât de ses richesses aux besoins pressans de l'Etat. L'archevêque de Canterbury..disoit que leur demande n'avoit pour fondement que l'irreligion et l'avarice."

The reformers, we see, were atheists in those days, as in ours: and to strip off what is superfluous is to expose the body politic to decay.

Henry IV was among the most politic of our princes. He and his successor may be compared with Philip and Alexander: but the two great Macedonian princes had not such difficulties to surmount as the two great English. Epaminondas alone, of all the Greeks, atchieved a victory so arduous as that of Agincourt. That of Poictiers was greater. To subdue the Athenians, or the Asiatics, and to subdue the French are widely different things. Henry V broke down their valour, and subverted the fundamental laws of their monarchy, as is proved by the sixth article in the treaty of Troyes.

"Après la mort du roi Charles, la couronne de France,

avec toutes ses dependences, appartiendra au roi d'Angleterre, et à ses heritiers."... A female then might eventually inherit it.

The monkish historians, and, more than these, Shakespear have given a glorious character of Henry IV. The fact is, Henry permitted any irregularity at home, and suffered any affront from his rival kings, rather than hazard the permanency of his power. He rose by the people; he stood by the clergy. He suffered even the isle of Wight to be invaded by the French, without a declaration of war against them.

We should be slow in our censure of princes. Kingship is a profession which has produced both the most illustrious and the most contemptible of the human race. That sovran is worthy of no slight respect, who rises in moral dignity to the level of his subjects; so manifold and so great are the impediments.

# CONVERSATION IV.

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## SOUTHEY

AND

## PORSON.

# SOUTHEY

AND

# PORSON.

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PORSON.

I SUSPECT, Mr. Southey, that you are angry with me for the freedom with which I have spoken of your poetry and Mr. Wordsworth's.

SOUTHEY.

What could have induced you to imagine it, Mr. Professor? You have indeed bent your eyes upon me, since we have been together, with somewhat of fierceness and defiance; but I presumed that you fancied me to be a commentator; and I am not irritated at a mistake. You wrong me, in your belief that an opinion on my poetical works hath molested me; but you afford me more than compensation in supposing me acutely sensible of any injustice done to Wordsworth. If we must converse at all upon these topics, we will converse

on him. What man ever existed, who spent a more retired, a more inoffensive, a more virtuous life, or who adorned it with more noble studies?

PORSON.

I believe so; I have always heard it; and those who attack him with virulence or with levity are men of no morality and no reflection. I have demonstrated that one of them, he who wrote the *Pursuits of Literature*, could not construe a Greek sentence or scan a verse; and I have fallen on the very *Index* from which he drew out his forlorn hope on the parade. This is incomparably the most impudent fellow I have met with in the course of my reading, which has lain, you know, in a province where impudence is no rarity. He has little more merit in having stolen, than he would have had if he had never stolen at all. Those who have failed as painters turn picture-cleaners, those who have failed as writers turn reviewers. Orator Henley taught in the last century, that the readiest made shoes are boots cut down: there are those who abundantly teach us now, that the readiest made critics are cut down poets. Their assurance is however by no means diminished from their ill success. Even the little man who followed you in the *Critical Review*, poor Robin Fellowes, whose pretensions widen every

smile his imbecillity has excited, would, I am persuaded, if Homer were living, pat him in a fatherly way upon the cheek, and tell him that, by moderating his fire and contracting his prolixity, the public might ere long expect something from him worth reading.

I had visited a friend in *King's Road* when Robin entered.

"*Have you seen the Review?*" cried he to him..."*worse than ever! I am resolved to insert a paragraph in the papers, declaring that I had no concern in the last number.*"

"*Is it so very bad?*" said I quietly.

"*Infamous! detestable!*" exclaimed he.

"*Sit down then...nobody will believe you;*" was my answer.

Since that morning he has discovered that I drink harder than usual, that my faculties are wearing fast away, that once indeed I had some Greek in my head, but...he then claps the forefinger to the side of his nose, turns his eye slowly upward, and looks compassionately and calmly.

SOUTHEY.

Come Mr. Porson, grant him his merits: no critic was ever better contrived to make any work a very periodical one, no writer more dexterous in giving a finishing touch.

PORSON.

The plagiary has a greater latitude of choice than we; and if he brings home a parsnip or turnip-top, when he could as easily have pocketed a nectarine or a pine-apple, he must be a blockhead. I never heard the name of that pursuer of literature; and I have forgotten that other man's, who evinced his fitness to be the censor of the age, by a translation of the most naked and impure satires of all antiquity, those of Juvenal, which owe their preservation to the partiality of the friars; but indeed they are so impregnated and incrusted with bay-salt and alum that they would not burn. I shall entertain a very unfavourable opinion of him if he has translated them well: pray has he?

SOUTHEY.

Indeed I do not know. I read poets for their poetry, and to extract that nutriment of the intellect and of the heart which poetry should contain. I never listen to the swans of the sess-pool, and must declare that nothing is heavier to me than rottenness and corruption.

PORSON.

You are right, sir, perfectly right. A translator of Juvenal would open a public drain to look for a needle, and may miss it. My nose is not easily offended; but I must have something to fill

my belly: come, we will lay aside the scrip of the transpositor and the pouch of the pursuer, in reserve for the days of unleavened bread, and again, if you please, to the lakes and mountains. Now we are both in better humour, I must bring you to a confession that in your friend Wordsworth there is occasionally a little trash.

SOUTHEY.

A haunch of venison would be trash to a Hindoo, a bottle of burgundy or tokay to the xerif of Mecca. We are guided in our choice, by precept, by habit, by taste, by constitution. Hitherto all our sentiments on poetry have been delivered down to us from authority; and if it can be demonstrated, as I think it may be, that the authority is inadequate, and that the dictates are often inapplicable and often misinterpreted, you will allow me to remove the cause out of court. Every man can see what is very bad in a poem, almost every one can see what is very good; but you, Mr. Porson, who have turned over all the volumes of all the commentators, will inform me whether I am right or wrong in asserting, that no critic hath yet appeared who has been able to fix or to discern the exact degrees of excellence above a certain point.

PORSON.

None.

SOUTHEY.

The reason is, because the eyes of no one have been upon a level with it. Supposing, for the sake of argument, the contest of Hesiod and Homer to have taken place: the judges, who decided in favour of the worse, who indeed has little merit, may have been elegant wise and conscientious men. Their decision was in favour of that poetry, to the species of which they had been the most accustomed. Corinna was preferred to Pindar no fewer than five times; and the best judges in Greece gave her the preference; yet whatever were her powers, and beyond all question they were extraordinary, we may assure ourselves that she stood many degrees below Pindar. Nothing is more absurd than the report, that the judges were prepossessed in her favour by her beauty. Plutarch tells us that she was much older than her competitor, who consulted her judgment in his earlier odes. Now, granting their first competition to have been when Pindar was twenty years old, and that all the others were in the years succeeding, her beauty must have been somewhat in the decline; for in Greece there are few women who retain the graces, none who

retain the bloom of youth, beyond the twenty third year. Her countenance, I doubt not, was expressive: but expression, although it gives beauty to men, makes women pay dearly for its stamp, and pay soon. Nature seems, in protection to their loveliness, to have ordered that they, who are our superiors in quickness and sensibility, should in general be little disposed to laborious thought, or to long excursions in the labyrinths of fancy. We may be convinced that the verdict of the judges was biassed by nothing else than their habitudes of thinking: we may be convinced too, that, living in an age when poetry was cultivated so highly, and selected from the most acute and the most dispassionate, they were subject to no greater errors of opinion than are the learned messmates of our English colleges.

PORSON.

You are more liberal in your largesses to the fair Greeks, than a friend of mine was, who resided in Athens to acquire the language. He assured me that beauty there was in bud at thirteen, in full blossom at fifteen, losing a leaf or two every day at seventeen, trembling on the thorn at nineteen, and under the tree at twenty. He would have been but an indifferent courtier in the palace of a certain prince, whose exclamation was,

O could a girl of sixty breed,
Then, marriage, thou wert bliss indeed!

I will not dissemble or deny, that to compositions of a new kind, like Wordsworth's, we come without scales and weights, and without the means of making an assay.

SOUTHEY.

Mr. Porson, it does not appear to me, that anything more is necessary in the first instance, than to interrogate our hearts in what manner they have been affected. If the ear is satisfied; if at one moment a tumult is aroused in the breast, and tranquillized at another with a perfect consciousness of equal power exerted in both cases; if we rise up from the perusal of the work with a strong excitement to thought, to imagination, to sensibility; above all if we sat down with some propensities towards evil, and walk out with much stronger towards good, in the midst of a world, which we never had entered, and of which we never had dreamed before; can we so suddenly put on again the *old man* of criticism, as to deny that we have been conducted by a most beneficent and most potent genius? Nothing proves to me so manifestly in what a pestiferous condition are its lazarettos, as when I observe how little hath been objected against those who have substituted

words for things, and how much against those who have reinstated things for words.

Let Wordsworth prove to the world, that there may be animation without blood and broken bones, and tenderness remote from the stews. Some may doubt it; for even things the most evident are often but little perceived and strangely estimated. Swift ridiculed the music of Handel and the generalship of Marlborough, Pope the style of Middleton and the scholarship of Bentley, Gray the abilities of Shaftesbury and the eloquence of Rousseau. Shakespear hardly found those who would collect his tragedies; Milton was read from godliness; Virgil was antiquated and rustic, Cicero Asiatic. What a rabble has persecuted my friend, in these latter times the glory of our country. An elephant is born to be consumed by ants in the midst of his unapproachable solitudes. Wordsworth is the prey of Jeffrey. Why repine? and not rather amuse ourselves with allegories, and recollect that God in the creation left his noblest creature at the mercy of a serpent.

PORSON.

In my opinion your friend is verbose; not indeed without something for his words to rest upon, but

from a resolution to gratify and indulge his capacity. He pursues his thoughts too far; and considers more how he may shew them entirely, than how he may shew them advantageously. Good men may utter whatever comes uppermost, good poets may not. It is better, but it is also more difficult, to make a selection of thoughts, than to accumulate them. He who has a splendid sideboard, should likewise have an iron chest with a double lock upon it, and should hold in reserve a greater part than he displays.

Wordsworth goes out of his way to be attacked. He picks up a piece of dirt, throws it on the carpet in the midst of the company, and cries "*This is a better man than any of you.*" He does indeed mould the base material into what form he chooses; but why not rather invite us to contemplate it, than challenge us to condemn it? This surely is false taste.

SOUTHEY.

The principal and the most general accusation against Wordsworth is, that the vehicle of his thoughts is unequal to them. Now did ever the judges at the Olympic games say, "*We would have awarded to you the meed of victory, if your chariot had been equal to your horses: it is true*

*they have won; but the people is displeased at a car neither new nor richly gilt, and without a gryphen or sphynx engraven on the axle?"*

You admire simplicity in Euripides; you censure it in Wordsworth: believe me, sir, it arises in neither from penury of thought, which seldom has produced it, but from the strength of temperance, and at the suggestion of principle.

Take up a poem of Wordsworth's and read it; I would rather say, read them all; and, knowing that a mind like yours must grasp closely what comes within it, I will then appeal to you whether any poet of our country, since Shakspeare, has exerted a greater variety of powers with less strain and less ostentation. I would however, with his permission, lay before you for this purpose a poem which is yet unpublished and incomplete.

PORSON.

Pity, with his abilities, he does not imitate the ancients somewhat more.

SOUTHEY.

Whom did they imitate? If his genius is equal to theirs he has no need of a guide. He also will be an ancient; and the very counterparts of those, who now decry him, will extoll him a thousand years hence in malignity to the moderns. Whatever is good in poetry is common to all good poets,

however wide may be the diversity of manner. Nothing can be more dissimilar than the three Greek tragedians: but would you prefer the closest and best copier of Homer to the worst (whichever he be) amongst them? Let us avoid what is indifferent or doubtful, and embrace what is good, whether we see it in another or not; and if we have contracted any peculiarity while our muscles and bones were softer, let us hope finally to outgrow it. Our feelings and modes of thinking forbid and exclude a very frequent imitation of the old classics, not to mention our manners, which have a nearer connection than is generally known to exist with the higher poetry. When the occasion permitted it, Wordsworth has not declined to treat a subject as an ancient poet of equal vigour would have treated it. Let me repeat to you his Laodamia.

PORSON.

After your animated recital of this most classic poem, I begin to think more highly of you both. It is pleasant to find two poets living as brothers, and particularly when the palm lies between them, without any third in sight. Those who have ascended to the summit of the mountain, sit quietly and familiarly side by side; it is only those who are climbing with gravel in their shoes, that

scramble, kick, and jostle. You have recited a most spirited thing indeed. I never had read it. Now to give you a proof that I have been attentive, I will remark two passages that offend me. In the first stanza,

> With sacrifice before the rising morn
> Performed, my slaughtered lord have I required;
> And in thick darkness, amid shades forlorn,
> Him of the infernal Gods have I desired.

The second line and the fourth terminate too much alike: *have I required* and *have I desired* are worse than prosaic. In another,

> He spake of love, such love as spirits feel
> In worlds whose course is equable and pure;
> No fears to beat away, no strife to heal,
> The past unsighed for, and the future sure;
> Spake, as a witness, of a second birth
> For all that is most perfect upon earth.

In a composition such as Sophocles might have exulted to own, and in a stanza the former part of which might have been heard with shouts of rapture in the regions he describes, how unseasonable is the allusion to *witness* and *second* birth, which things, however holy and venerable in themselves, come stinking and reeking to us from the conventicle. I desire to see Laodamia in the silent

and gloomy mansion of her beloved Protesilaus; not elbowed by the godly butchers in Tottenham-court-road, nor smelling devoutly of ratafia among the sugar-bakers at Blackfriars.

Mythologies should be kept distinct: the fire-place of one should never be subject to the smoke of another. The Gods of different countries, when they come together unexpectedly, are jealous Gods, and, as our old women say, *turn the house out of windows.*

A current of rich and bright thoughts runs throughout the poem. Pindar himself would not, on that subject, have braced one into more nerve and freshness, nor Euripides have inspired into it more tenderness and more passion. I am not insensible to that warmly chaste morality which is the soul of it, nor indifferent to the benefits that literature on many occasions has derived from Christianity. But poetry is a luxury to which, if she tolerates and permits it, she accepts no invitation: she beats down your gates and citadels, levels your high places, and eradicates your groves. For which reason I dwell more willingly with those authors, who cannot mix and confound the manners they represent. The hope that we may rescue at Herculaneum a great number of them hath, I firmly believe, kept me alive. Reasonably

may all the best be imagined to exist in a library of some thousands. It will be recorded to the eternal infamy of the kings and princes now reigning, or rather of those whose feet put into motion their rocking horses, that they never have made a common cause in behalf of learning, but on the contrary have made a common cause against it. The earth opened her entrails before them, conjured them to receive again, while it was possible, the glories of their species... and they turned their backs. They pretend that it is not their business or their duty to interfere in the internal affairs of other states. This is not an internal affair of any state whatever: it interests all; it belongs to all; and these scrupulous men have no scruple to interfere in giving their countenance and assistence, when a province is to be torn away or a people to be enslaved. The most contemptible of the Medicean family did more for the advancement of letters than all the potentates now in existence. If their delicacy is shocked or alarmed at the idea of making a proposal to send scientific and learned men thither, let them send a brace of pointers and the property is their own. Twenty men in seven years might retrieve all the losses we have experienced from the bigotry of popes and califs. I do not intend to assert, that every Her-

culanean manuscript might within that period be unfolded; but the three first sentences of the larger part might be; which is quite sufficient to inform the scholar, whether a further attempt on the scroll would repay his trouble. There are fewer than thirty Greek authors worth inquiring for; they exist beyond doubt, and beyond doubt they may with attention, patience, and skill be brought to light. With a smaller sum than is annually expended on the appointment of some silly and impertinent young envoy, we might recall into existence all, or nearly all, those men of immortal name, whose disappearance has been the regret of Genius for three hundred years. In my opinion a few thousand pounds laid out on such an undertaking would be laid out as creditably as on a Persian carpet or a Turkish tent; as creditably as on a collar of rubies and a ball-dress of Brussells-lace for our Lady in the manger, or as on gilding, for the adoration of princesses and their capuchins, the posteriors and anteriors of saint Januarius.

# CONVERSATION V.

## OLIVER CROMWEL

AND

## WALTER NOBLE.

# OLIVER CROMWEL

AND

# WALTER NOBLE.

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CROMWEL.

WHAT brings thee back from Staffordshire, friend Walter?

NOBLE.

I hope, general Cromwel, to persuade you that the death of Charles will be considered by all Europe as a most atrocious action.

CROMWEL.

Thou hast already persuaded me: what then?

NOBLE.

Surely then you will prevent it, for your authority is great. Even those who upon their consciences found him guilty, would remitt the penalty of blood, some from policy, some from mercy. I have conversed with Hutchinson, with Ludlow, your friend and mine, and with Walter Long: you

will oblige these worthy friends, and unite in your favour the suffrages of the wisest and best men existing. There are many others, with whom I am in no habits of intercourse, who are known to entertain the same sentiments, among the country gentlemen to whom our parliament owes the better part of its reputation.

CROMWEL.

You country gentlemen bring with you into the People's House a freshness and sweet savour, which our citizens lack mightily. I would fain merit your esteem, heedless of these pursy fellows from hulks and warehouses, with one ear lappetted by the pen behind it, and the other an heirloom, as Charles would have had it, in Laud's star-chamber. Oh! they are proud and bloody men. My heart melts; but alas! my authority is null: I am the servant of the Commonwealth: I will not, dare not, betray it. If Charles Stuart had only threatened my death, in the letter we ripped out of the saddle, I would have reproved him manfully and turned him adrift: but others are concerned, lives more precious than mine, worne as it is with fastings, prayers, long services, and preyed upon by a pouncing disease. The Lord hath led him into the toils laid for the innocent. Foolish man! he never could eschew evil counsel.

NOBLE.

In comparison with you, he is but as a pinnacle to a butress. I acknowledge his weaknesses, and cannot wink upon his crimes. But what you visit as the heaviest of them, perhaps was not so, although the most disastrous to both parties, the bearing of arms against his people. He fought for what he considered as his hereditary property: we do the same: should we be hanged for losing a lawsuit?

CROMWEL.

Not unless it is the second... Thou talkest finely and foolishly, Wat, for a man of thy calm discernment. If a rogue holds a pistol to my breast, do I ask him what he is about? do I care whether his doublet be of dog-skin or of cat-skin? Fie upon such wicked sophisms! Marvellous, how the devil works upon good men's minds.

NOBLE.

Charles was always more to be dreaded by his friends than by his enemies, and now by neither.

CROMWEL.

God forbid that Englishman should be feared by Englishman! but to be daunted by the weakest, to bend before the worst... I tell thee, Walter Noble, that if Moses and the prophets commanded

me to this villainy, I would draw back and mount my horse.

NOBLE.

I could wish that our history, already too dark with blood, should contain, as far as we are concerned in it, some unpolluted pages.

CROMWEL.

'Twere better so, much better. Never shall I be called, I promise thee, an unnecessary shedder of blood. But remember, my good prudent friend, of what materials our sectaries are composed: what hostility against all eminence, what rancour against all glory. How the knaves dictate from their stools and benches, to men in armour, bruized and bleeding for them! with what fatherly scourges in their fists do they give counsel to those who protect them from the cart and halter. In the name of the Lord, I must piss upon these firebrands before I can make them tractable.

NOBLE.

I lament their blindness; but follies wear out the faster by being hard run upon. This fermenting sourness will presently turn vapid, and people will cast it out. I am not surprized that you are discontented and angry at what thwarts your better nature. But, come, Cromwel, over-

look them, despise them, and erect to yourself a glorious name by sparing a mortal enemy.

CROMWEL.

A glorious name, by God's blessing, I will erect, and all our fellow labourers shall rejoice at it: but I see better than they do the blow descending on them, and my arm better than theirs can ward it off. Noble, thy heart overflows with kindness for Charles Stuart: if he were at liberty tomorrow by thy intercession, he would sign thy death-warrant the day after for serving the Commonwealth. A generation of vipers! There is nothing upright or grateful in them: never was there a drop of true Scotch blood in their veins. Indeed we have a clue to their bedchamber still hanging on the door, and I suspect that an Italian fidler or French valet has more than once crossed the current.

NOBLE.

That may be: nor indeed is it credible that any royal or courtly family has gone on for three generations without a spur from some interloper. Look at France! some stout Parisian saint performed the last miracle there.

CROMWEL.

Now thou talkest gravely and sensibly: I could hear thee discourse thus for hours together.

NOBLE.

Hear me, Cromwel, with equal patience on matters more important. We all have our sufferings; why increase one another's wantonly? Be the blood Scotch or English, French or Italian, a drummer's or a buffoon's, it carries a soul upon its stream, and every soul has many places to touch at, and much business to perform, before it reaches its ultimate destination. Abolish the power of Charles; extinguish not his virtues: he may be a good father who was a bad king. Whatever is worthy to be loved for any thing is worthy of preservation. A wise and dispassionate legislator, if any such should ever arise among men, will not condemn to death him who has done, or is likely to do, more service than injury to society. Blocks and gibbets are the nearest objects to ours, and their business is never with hopes or with virtues.

CROMWEL.

Walter, Walter! we laugh at speculators.

NOBLE.

Many indeed are ready enough to laugh at speculators, because many profit, or expect to profit, by established and widening abuses. Speculations towards evil lose their name by adoption: specu-

lations towards good are for ever speculations, and he who hath proposed them is a chimerical and weak creature.

CROMWEL.

Proportions should exist in all things. Sovrans are paid higher than others for their office: they should therefor be punished more severely for abusing it, even if the consequences of this abuse were in nothing more grievous or extensive. We cannot clap them in the stocks conveniently, nor whip them at the market-place. Where there is a crown there must be an axe: I would keep it there only.

NOBLE.

Lop off the rotten, press out the poisonous, keep well the rest. Let it suffice to have given this memorable example of national power and justice.

CROMWEL.

Justice is perfect; an attribute of God; we must not trifle with it.

NOBLE.

Should we be less merciful to our fellow creatures than to our domestic animals? Before we deliver them to be killed, we weigh their services against their inconveniences. On the foundation of policy, when we have no better, let us erect the

trophies of humanity: let us consider that, educated in the same manner, and situated in the same position, we ourselves might have acted as reprovably. Abolish that for ever which must else for ever generate abuses; and attribute the faults of the man to the office, not the faults of the office to the man.

CROMWEL.

I abominate and detest kingship.

NOBLE.

I abominate and detest hangmanship; but in certain stages of society both are necessary. Let them go together, we want neither now.

CROMWEL.

Prythee, Wat, since thou readest, as I see, the books of philosophers, didst thou ever hear of Digby's remedies by sympathy?

NOBLE.

Yes, formerly.

CROMWEL.

Well, now, I protest, I do believe there is something in them. To cure my headache, I must breathe a vein in the neck of Charles.

NOBLE.

Oliver, Oliver, others are wittiest over wine, thou over blood...cold-hearted, cruel man.

CROMWEL.

Why, dost thou verily think me so, Walter? Perhaps thou art right in the main: but he alone, who fashioned me in my mother's womb, and who sees things deeper than we do, knows that.

# CONVERSATION VI.

## ÆSCHINES

AND

## PHOCION.

# ÆSCHINES

AND

# PHOCION.

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ÆSCHINES.

O PHOCION, again I kiss the hand that hath ever raised up the unfortunate.

PHOCION.

I know not, Æschines, to what your discourse would tend.

ÆSCHINES.

Yesterday, when the malice of Demosthenes would have turned against me the vengeance of the people, by pointing me out as him whom the priestess of Apollo had designated, in declaring that the Athenians were all unanimous, one excepted, did you not cry aloud, *I am that man; I approve nothing you do?* That I see you again, that I can express to you my gratitude, these are your gifts.

PHOCION.

And does Æschines then suppose that I should not have performed my duty, whether he were alive or dead? To have removed from the envy of an ungenerous rival, and from the resentment of an inconsiderate populace, the citizen who possesses my confidence, the orator who defends my country, and the soldier who has fought by my side, was among those actions which are always well repaid. The line is drawn across the account: let us close it.

ÆSCHINES.

I am not insensible, nor have ever been, to the afflicted; my compassion has been excited in the city and in the field; but when have I been moved, as I am now, to weeping? Your generosity is more pathetic than pity or than pain; and at your eloquence, stern as it is, O Phocion, my tears gush like those warm fountains which burst forth suddenly from some convulsion of the earth.

Immortal Gods! that Demades and Polyeuctes and Demosthenes should prevail in the council over Phocion! that even their projects for a campaign should be adopted in preference to that general's who hath defeated Philip in every encounter, and should precipitate the war against the advice of a politician, by whose presages,

and his only, the Athenians have never been deceived!

PHOCION.

It is true, I am not popular.

ÆSCHINES.

Become so.

PHOCION.

It has been in my power to commit base actions; and I abstained: would my friend advise me to committ the basest of all? to court the favour of men I abominate and despise!

ÆSCHINES.

You court not even those who love and honour you. Thirty times and oftener have you been chosen to lead our armies, and never once were present at the assembly which elected you. Unparalleled glory! when have the Gods shown any thing similar among men! Not Aristides, nor Epaminondas, the most virtuous of mortals, not Miltiades nor Cimon, the most glorious in their exploits, not Codrus, so great as to redeem from contempt the name of king, enjoyed the favour of Heaven so uninterruptedly. No presents, no solicitations, no flatteries, no concessions; you never even asked a vote, however gravely, legitimately, customarily.

PHOCION.

The highest price we can pay for anything is, to ask it: and to solicit a vote appears to me as base an action as to solicit a place in a will: it is not ours, and might have been another's.

Indifference to the welfare of our country is a crime; but if our country is reduced to such a condition that the bad are preferred to the good, the foolish to the wise, hardly any catastrophe is to be deprecated or opposed that may shake them from their places.

ÆSCHINES.

In dangerous and trying times they fall naturally and necessarily, as flies drop from a curtain let down in winter. But if the people demands of me what better I would propose than my adversaries, such are the extremities to which their boisterousness and levity have reduced us, I can return no answer. We are in the condition of a wolf biting off his leg to escape from the trap that has caught it.

PHOCION.

Calamities have assaulted mankind in such a variety of attacks, that nothing now can be devised against them. He who would strike out any thing novel in architecture, commits a folly in safety;

his house and he may stand; but he who attempts it in politics, carries a torch, from which at the first narrow passage we may expect a conflagration. Experience is our only teacher both in war and peace. As we formerly did against the Lacedæmonians and their allies, we might by our naval superiority seize or blockade the maritime towns of Philip; we might conciliate Sparta, who has outraged and defied him; we might wait even for his death, impending from drunkenness, lust, ferocity, and inevitable in a short space of time, from the vengeance to which they expose him at home. It is a dangerous thing for a monarch to corrupt a nation yet uncivilized; to corrupt a civilized one is the wisest thing he can do.

ÆSCHINES.

I see no reason why we should not send an executioner to release him from the prison-house of his crimes, with his family to attend him. Kings play at war unfairly with republics. They can only lose some earth and some creatures that they value as little; while republics lose in every soldier a part of themselves. Therefore no wise republic ought to be satisfied, unless she bring to punishment the individual most obnoxious, and those about him who may be supposed to have made him so, his counsellors and his courtiers.

Retaliation is not a thing to be feared. The Locrians have admitted only two new laws in two hundred years; because he who proposes to establish or to change one, comes with a halter round his throat, and is strangled if his proposition is rejected. Let wars, which ought justly to be more perilous to the adviser, be but equally so: let those who engage in them perish if they lose, I mean the principals, and new wars will be as rare among others as new laws among the Locrians.

PHOCION.

Both laws and wars are much addicted to the process of generation. Philip, I am afraid, has prepared the Athenians for his government. I wonder how in a free state, any man of common sense can be bribed. The corrupter would only spend his money on persons of some calculation and reflection: with how little of either must those be endowed, who do not see that they are paying a perpetuity for an annuity! Suppose that they, amidst suspicions both from him in whose favour they betray, and from those to whose detriment they have betrayed, can enjoy what they receive; yet what security have their children and dependents? Property is usually gained in hope no less of bequeathing than of enjoying it; but how certain is it that these will lose greatly more than was ac-

quired for them! If they lose their country and their laws, what have they? The bribes of monarchs will be discovered by the receiver to be like pieces of furniture given to a man who, on returning home, finds that his house, in which he intended to place them, has another master. I can conceive no bribery at all seductive to the most profligate, short of that which establishes the citizen bribed among the members of an hereditary aristocracy, which in the midst of a people is a kind of foren state, where the spoiler and traitor may take refuge. Now Philip is not so inhuman, as, in case he should be the conqueror, to inflict on us so humiliating a punishment. Our differences with him are but recent, and he marches from policy not from enmity. The Lacedemonians did indeed attempt it, in the imposition of the thirty tyrants; but so monstrous a state of degradation and of infamy roused us from our torpor, threw under us and beneath our view all other wretchedness, and we recovered, (I wish we could retain it as easily!) our independence.... What depresses you?

ÆSCHINES.

Oh! could I embody the spirit I receive from you, and present it in all its purity to the Athenians, they would surely hear me with as much

attention, as that invoker and violator of the Gods, Demosthenes, to whom my blood would be the most acceptable libation at the feasts of Philip. Pertinacity and clamorousness, he imagines, are the tests of sincerity and truth; although we know that a weak orator raises his voice higher than a powerful one, as the lame raise their legs higher than the sound. Can any thing be so ridiculous as the pretensions of this man, who, because I employ no action, says *action is the first, the second, the third requisite of oratory*, while he himself is the most ungraceful of all our speakers, and, even in appealing to the Gods, begins by scratching his head?

PHOCION.

This is surely no inattention or indifference to the powers above. I smile at reflecting on the levity with which we contemporaries often judge of those great authors whom posterity will read with incessant admiration: such is Demosthenes. Differ as we may from him in politics, we must acknowledge that no language is more forcible, more clear; no combinations of words more novel, no sequency of sentences more diversified, more admirably pitched and concerted. Accustomed to consider as the best what is at once the most simple and emphatic, and knowing that whatever

satisfies the understanding, conciliates the ear, I think him little if at all inferior to Aristoteles in style, although in wisdom he is as a mote to a sunbeam; and much superior to Plato; excellent as was he; gorgeous indeed, but becomingly so, as wealthy monarchs are, and truly a magnificent piece of the Gods' work in their richest materials. Defective however and faulty must be the composition in prose, which you and I with all our study and attention cannot understand. In poetry it is not exactly so: the greater part of it must be intelligible to all: but in the very best there is often an undersong of sense, which none besides the poetical mind, or one deeply versed in its mysteries, can comprehend. Euripides and Pindar have been blamed by many, who perceived not that the arrow drawn against them fell on Homer.

Let us praise, my Æschines, whatever we can reasonably: nothing is less laborious or irksome, no office is less importunate or nearer a sinecure. Above all others let us praise those who contend with us for glory, since they have already borne their suffrages to our judgment by entering on the same career. Deem it a peculiar talent, and such as no three men in any age have possessed, to give each great citizen or great writer his just proportion of applause. A barbarian king or his eunuch

can distribute equally and fairly beans and lentils; but I perceive that Æschines himself finds a difficulty in awarding just commendations.

A few days ago an old woman, who wrote formerly a poem on Codrus, such as Codrus with all his self-devotion would hardly have read to save his country, met me in the street, and taxed me with injustice towards Demosthenes.

"You do not know him, said she: he has heart, and somewhat of genius: true, he is singular and strange: but, I assure you, there is something in him, for I have seen some of his compositions that do him credit."

"Lady, replied I, Demosthenes is fortunate to be protected by the same cuirass as Codrus."

Singular and strange must every man appear who is different from his neighbours; and he is the most different from them who is the most above them. If the clouds were inhabited by men, the men must be of other form and features than those on earth, and their gait would not be the same as upon grass or gravel. Diversity no less is contracted by the habitations, as it were, and haunts, and exercises of our minds. Singularity, when it is natural, requires no apology; when it is affected, is detestable: such is that of our young people in bad handwriting. On my expedition to

Byzantium, the city decreed that a cloak should be given me worth forty drachmæ: and when I was about to return I folded it up carefully, in readiness for any service in which I might be employed hereafter. A young officer, studious to imitate my neatness, packed up his in the same manner, not without the hope perhaps that I might remark it, and my servant, or his, on our return, mistook it. I sailed for Athens; he, with a detachment, for Heraclea; whence he wrote to me that he had sent my cloak, requesting his own by the first conveyance. The name was quite illegible, and the carrier, whoever he was, had pursued his way homewards: I directed it then, as the only safe way, if indeed there was any safe one, *to the officer who writes worst at Heraclea.*

Come, a few more words upon Demosthenes. Do not, my friend, inveigh against him, lest a part of your opposition be attributed to hatred. How many arguments is it worth to him, if you appear to act from another motive than principle! True, his eloquence is imperfect: what among men is not? In his repartees there is no playfulness, in his voice there is no flexibility, in his action there is neither dignity nor grace: but how often has he stricken you dumb with his irony! how often has he tossed you from one hand to the other with

his interrogatories! What harmony of periods, what choice of expressions, how popular his allusions, how plain his illustrations, his dialect how Attic! Is this no merit? is it none in an age of idle rhetoricians, who have forgotten how their fathers and mothers spoke to them? His sentences are stout and compact as the Macedonian phalanx, animated and ardent as the sacred band of Thebes. Praise him, my Æschines, if you wish to be victorious; if you acknowledge that you are vanquished, then revile him and complain. In composition I know not any superior to him; and in an assembly of the people he derives advantages from his defects themselves, from the violence of his action, and from the vulgarity of his mien. Permit him to possess these advantages over you: consider him as a wrestler, whose body is robust, but whose feet rest upon something slippery: use your dexterity, and reserve your blows. Regard him, if less excellent as a statesman, citizen, or soldier, rather as a genius or dæmon, who, whether beneficent or malignant, hath, from an elevation far above us, launched forth many new stars into the firmament of mind.

ÆSCHINES.

O, that we had been born in other days! The best men always fall upon the worst.

PHOCION.

The Gods have not granted us, Æschines, the choice of being born when we would; that of dying when we would, they have. Thank them for it, as one among the most excellent of their gifts, and wait not for horn or herald: a whistle is here a signal. Whatever can happen to a wise and virtuous man from his worst enemy, whatever is most dreaded by the inconsiderate and irresolute, has happened to him frequently from himself, and not only without his inconvenience, but without his observation. We are prisoners as often as we bolt our doors, exiles as often as we walk to Munychia, and dead as often as we sleep. It would be a folly and a shame to argue that these things are voluntary, and that what our enemy imposes are not: they should be the more so if they befall us from necessity, unless necessity be less a reason with us than caprice. In fine, Æschines, I shall then call the times bad when they make me so. At present they are to be borne, as must also be the storm that follows them.

# CONVERSATION VII.

## QUEEN ELIZABETH

AND

## CECIL.

# QUEEN ELIZABETH

AND

# CECIL.

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ELIZABETH.

I ADVISE thee again, churlish Cecil, how that our Edmund Spenser, whom thou calledst most uncourteously a whining whelp, hath good and solid reason for his complaint. God's blood! shall the lady that tieth my garter and shuffleth the smock over my head, or the lord that steddieth my chair's back while I eat, or the other that looketh to my buck-hounds lest they be mangy, be holden by me in higher esteem and estate, than he who hath placed me among the bravest of past times, and will as safely and surely set me down among the loveliest in the future.

CECIL.

Your Highness must remember he carouseth

fully for such deserts... a hundred pounds ayear of unclipt monies, and a butt of canary wine*.

ELIZABETH.

The monies are not enow to sustain a pair of grooms and a pair of palfreys, and more wine hath been drunken in my presence at a feast. The monies are given to such men, that they may not incline nor be obligated to any vile or lowly occupation; and the canary, that they may entertain such promising Wits as court their company and converse; and that in such manner there may be alway in our land a succession of these heirs of Fame. He hath written, not indeed with his wonted fancifulness, nor in learned and majestical language, but in homely and rustic wise, some verses which have moved me; and haply the more so, inasmuchas they demonstrate to me that his genius hath been dampened by his adversities. Read them.

CECIL.

How much is lost when neither heart nor eye
Rosewinged Desire or fabling Hope deceives;
When boyhood with quick throb hath ceased to spy
The dubious apple in the yellow leaves;

* Calculating the prices of provisions and the increase of taxes, the poet-laureate in the time of Elizabeth had about four times as much as at present (1816); so that Cecil spoke reasonably, Elizabeth royally.

When, springing from the turf where youth reposed,
We find but deserts in the far-sought shore;
When the huge book of Faery-land lies closed,
And those strong brazen clasps will yield no more.

ELIZABETH.

The said Edmund hath also furnished unto the weaver at Arras, John Blaquieres, on my account, a description for some of his cunningest wenches to work at, supplied by mine own self indeed as far as the subject-matter goes, but set forth by him with figures and fancies, and daintily enough bedecked. I could have wished he had thereunto joined a fair comparison between Dian ... no matter ... he might perhaps have fared the better for it ... but poets' wits, God help them! when did they ever sit close about them! Read the poesy, not over-rich, and concluding very awkwardly and meanly.

CECIL.

Where forms the lotus, with its level leaves
And solid blossoms, many floating isles,
What heavenly radiance swiftdescending cleaves
The darksome wave! unwonted beauty smiles

On its pure bosom, on each bright-eyed flower,
On every nymph, and twenty sate around..
Lo! 'twas Diana.. from the sultry hour
Hither she fled, nor fear'd she sight nor sound.

Unhappy youth, whom thirst and quiver-reeds
Drew to these haunts, whom awe forbade to fly,
Three faithful dogs before him rais'd their heads,
And watched and wonder'd at that fixed eye.

Forth sprang his favorite.. with her arrow-hand
Too late the goddess hid what hand may hide,
Of every nymph and every reed complain'd,
And dashed upon the bank the waters wide.

On the prone head and sandal'd feet they flew..
Lo! slender hoofs and branching horns appear!
The last marred voice not even the favorite knew,
But bayed and fastened on the upbraiding deer.

Far be, chaste goddess, far from me and mine
The stream that tempts thee in the summer noon!
Alas that vengeance dwells with charms divine..

ELIZABETH.

Psha! give me the paper: I forewarned thee how it ended.. pitifully, pitifully.

CECIL.

I cannot think otherwise than that the undertaker of the aforecited poesy hath choused your highness; for I have seen painted, I know not where, the identically same Dian, with full as many nymphs, as he calls them, and more dogs. So small a matter as a page of poesy shall never stir my choler nor twitch my purse-string.

ELIZABETH.

I have read in Plinius and Mela of a runlet near Dodona, which kindled by approximation an unlighted torch and extinguished a lighted one. Now, Cecil, I desire no such a jetty to be celebrated as the decoration of my court: in simpler words, which your gravity may more easily under-

stand, I would not from the fountain of Honour give lustre to the dull and ignorant, deadening and leaving in "cold obstruction" the lamp of literature and genius. I ardently wish my reign to be remembered: if my actions were different from what they are, I should as ardently wish it to be forgotten. Those are the worst of suicides, who voluntarily and prepensely stab or suffocate their fame, when God has commanded them to stand up on high for an ensample. We call him parricide who destroys the author of his existence: tell me, what shall we call him who casts forth to the dogs and birds of prey, its most faithful propagator and most firm support? The parent gives us few days and sorrowful; the poet many and glorious: the one (supposing him discreet and kindly) best reproves our faults; the other best remunerates our virtues.

A page of poesy is a little matter: be it so: but of a truth I do tell thee, Cecil, it shall master full many a bold heart that the Spaniard cannot trouble; it shall win to it full many a proud and flighty one, that even chivalry and manly comeliness cannot touch. I may shake titles and dignities by the dozen from my breakfast-board; but I may not save those upon whose heads I shake them from rottenness and oblivion. This year

they and their sovran dwell together, next year they and their beagle. Both have names, but names perishable. The keeper of my privy-seal is an earl: what then? the keeper of my poultry-yard is a Cæsar. In honest truth, a name given to a man is no better than a skin given to him: what is not natively his own, falls off and comes to nothing.

I desire in future to hear no contempt of pen-men, unless a depraved use of the pen shall have so cramped them, as to incapacitate them for the sword and for the council-chamber. If Alexander was the great, what was Aristoteles who made him so? who taught him every art and science he knew, except three; those of drinking, of blaspheming, and of murdering his bosom-friends. Come along: I will bring thee back again nearer home. Thou mightest toss and tumble in thy bed many nights, and never eke out the substance of a stanza: but Edmund, if perchance I should call upon him for his counsel, would give me as wholesome and prudent as any of you. We should indemnify such men for the injustice we do unto them in not calling them about us, and for the mortification they must suffer at seeing their inferiors set before them. Edmund is grave and gentle: he complains of Fortune, not of Elizabeth, of courts, not

of Cecil. I am resolved, so help me God, he shall have no further cause for his repining. Go, convey unto him those twelve silver-spoons, with the apostols on them, gloriously gilded; and deliver into his hand these twelve large golden pieces, sufficing for the yearly maintenance of another horse and groom: besides which, set open before him with due reverence this bible, wherein he may read the mercies of God towards those who waited in patience for his blessing; and this pair of cremisin silken hosen, which thou knowest I have worne only thirteen months, taking heed that the heelpiece be put into good and sufficient restauration, at my sole charges, by the Italian woman at Charing-cross.

# CONVERSATION VIII.

## KING JAMES I

AND

## ISAAC CASAUBON.

# KING JAMES I

AND

# ISAAC CASAUBON*.

JAMES.

Good M. Casaubon, I am vexed and perturbed in spirit, to find that all my moderation and all

* Casaubon, the four last years of his life, resided at the court of James I, and his opinion was consulted and his pen employed, when that religious king made proposals to the pope, for reconciling the Roman-catholic church with the catholic apostolic. He was a singularly virtuous and pious man, a liberal disputant, a sound critic, and of extensive no less than accurate scholarship. Among his friends he had the happiness of numbering a Thuanus, a Scaliger, a Douza, a Heinsius, a Taubmann, an Erpenius, a Gruter, a Beza, and a Grotius. Let no man hereafter hope ever to see, certainly none will ever live familiarly with, so many who have deserved so well of letters.

James was inglorious, for he was a Stuart; he was parsimonious, for he was a Scotchman; he was arrogant, for he was a theologian; and he was arbitrary, for he was educated in the doctrine of prerogative. No family in so many genera-

my zeal, which never has departed from it, should be opposed and thwarted by the Pontificials.

tions has exhibited so few virtues: yet it would be unjust to deny that he was the best of his race; that he was sincere and candid, that he was temperate and compassionate, that he was patient and beneficent, that he was learned and the favourer at least, if not the patron and remunerator, of learned men. Pompous as he was, he was less unbending than many constitutional kings have been; a practise which did not prevail in Europe until the minor potentates thought it becoming to imitate Louis XIV, and judiciously took that part of his character which was the most easy to copy. Unbendingness, in the moral as in the vegetable world, is an indication as frequently of unsoundness as of strength. Indeed wise men, whether kings or others, have been always free from it. Stiff necks are diseased ones. James conversed, on friendly and social terms, with many who never lied for him, never extorted for him, never extended his power, never pampered his pride, never pandered to his sensuality. He maintained the divine right of kings: we call the doctrine a monstrous one. Now those who *give* constitutions, must possess a divine right; whence else comes it? We have seen these given near home, and we have applauded the giver.

Dari bonum quod potuit auferri potest.

James called himself catholic, and insisted that the appellation could not be refused him, who acknowledged as articles of faith the three creeds, the four Ecumenical Councils, and every doctrine received as necessary to salvation in the four first centuries of the faith. If the title was worth having, it was clearly his.

As in these Dialogues I have not inserted a single sentence written by, or recorded of, the personages who are supposed to hold them, I have thought it needful to subjoin occasional notes and illustrations. On the eighth in particular I shall exceed my usual bounds, recommending at the same time an attentive perusal of Casaubon's letters on the subject.

CASAUBON.

Your Majesty could entertain but feeble hopes of accommodation, where avarice and pride are the directors of every counsel. The advantage however, which I pointed out to your Majesty, is obtained, inasmuchas you have hung your proofs upon the highest peg in the chambers of the Vatican, and these manifest to the world below you both the sincerity of your heart and the solidity of your arguments.

JAMES.

I could have wished that whatever leads to fellowship and concord were tolerated and encouraged. It is not the interest of kings to carry the forest-laws into churches. On this principle and persuasion I admitted many papists to offices about my person, not expecting that they would prepare for me such a blazing fire so early in the season: and after all, such is my spirit of peace and conciliation, though I would rather keep them out of my cellar and my kitchen, I should not however be loth to go with them, if their priests would allow me, to the communion-table. The Gospel says, *this is my body:* it does not say *how.* I am far from angry with the mass-maker for knowing more about it than I do, or than my master chose to tell my betters, his apostles and

disciples, or for insisting on transubstantiation, the very name of which was not in existence for some hundred years after he left the earth. Let every christian take the sacrament: let all neighbours take it together: let each apply to it his own idea of its import and its essence. At every commemoration-dinner, one would wish something which he does not see upon the table, another is desirous that the dish which stands before him were away; yet surely all may find that wherein their tastes agree; and nothing, of what is present or of what is absent, can alter their sentiments as to the harmony of the meeting or the object of the entertainment. Such feelings, let me ascend from the little to the great, from the ordinary to the solemn, will the christian's be at the sacrament of the eucharist. The memory of that day when it first was celebrated, makes me anxious to open my arms towards all, and to treat the enemies of my throne with the charity of the Gospel.

We gratify our humours in sovranty, in Christianity our affections; in this always our best, in that often our worst. You know not, M. Casaubon, how pleasant a thing it is to converse naturally, because you have always done so; but we kings feel it sensibly, those at least amongst us, to whom God hath vouchsafed a plain understanding.

It is like unto a removal from the curtained and closed chamber of sickness, where every footfall is suspended and measured, every voice constrained and lowered, into our native air again, amidst the songs and pipings of our shepherds and the wilder and more exuberant harmony of our woodlands. To you the whole intellectual world lies open: we must speak only in epigrams or in oracles. The book however which I hold in my hand, teaches me that the practise should be laid aside, and that we ought not to be ashamed of acknowledging a sort of relation, at home, with those whom in the house of God we call our brethren. If I fall rather short of this, I do not pretend to tell a man how he should sing, or how he should pronounce his language, or upon which side he should lie in bed, much less in what manner he should think on subjects which concern not me. I would exclude none from the benefit of law, none from the enjoyment of dignity: I would establish the catholic peers in that House, from which their friends Garnet and Catesby* would, to serve their own purposes, have exploded them. What think you?

* Garnettus vester a Catesbeio consultus, essetne licitum sontes insontesque perdere, si alteri sine alteris extingui non possent, semel ita respondit in privatis suis ædibus: "Licere,

CASAUBON.

I see not how your Majesty can receive as your counsellors, or indeed as any part of those who are to govern, judge, or administrate, men who profess that another has by right a greater power in this realm, not only than your Majesty, but than all the three estates conjointly. They are bound to assist in placing the instruction of your people out of your hands: they are bound to murder you if you resist the authority of the pope, or even if they are informed by him that such an action is of advantage to the Church: indeed any one may murder you, let him only be persuaded by two or three factious but learned men* that it is conducive to the interests of his *Holiness.*

si tantum ex ea re boni proventurum esset, quantum aliquot insontium necem compensare potest."—So that murder may be committed even without advantage! The jesuit requires only a balance of good, and reckons the murder itself as merely an inoffensive means of obtaining it. " Iterum in campis suburbanis, quibus a palude nomen, in hanc sententiam . . ' et posse et licere cum sontibus insontes *exsufflari,* magnique adeo meriti rem fore, si id magno alicui bono catholicis caderet.' "

A few factious but learned men, deciding that such or such a thing is of great advantage to catholics, may, not only justly but with glory, blow up fifty or a hundred of their own *insontes* amongst two or three hundred heretics.

* The question was proposed and decided in the affirmative. It was not an idle or a speculative one, but prepared the minds of the Roman-catholics, and led the way to the murder of two kings, Henry III and Henry IV of France.

JAMES.

I apprehend that my intentions must be deferred. O Lord! preserve my life for thy glory!

The name of the former was inserted for *illustration*.. An liceat regem legitimum, *puta Henricum III Regem Galliarum Christianissimum, postquam a paucis seditiosis sed doctis cœperit tyrannus appellari,* occidere? It is lamentable that the governments of Europe should have permitted such questions to be agitated by the clergy, to whom they least of all belong. It became them to imprison or punish capitally any pope who countenanced these universal rebels. Let those who inveigh so violently, against the *Illuminati,* the *Carbonarj,* the *Radicals,* read the following language of the papal agents. The French regicide, Jaques Clement, a supremæ auctoritatis judicibus de causâ suscepti parricidii interrogatus, quum more patrio in reorum cellulâ sederet, non per ambages aut ænigmata sed liquidò et disertè respondit, ideo se quod fecerat fecisse, quia rex protestantibus Germaniæ principibus opem ferre parans in causâ Cliviensi, Pontifici Maximo *rem faceret ingratam, ac proinde dignus esset qui periret:* deum enim se in terris Romanum Pontificem agnoscere, cujus voluntati qui sese *quovis pacto* opponeret eum se habere exitio devotum. Ipsissima feralis illius prodigii verba sunt, *Papa est deus et deus est Papa*.. Happy that people, whose Gods were leeks! religion could not teach them that perfidy and murder were virtues.

No treason of a priest against a king is criminal. Father Emanuel Sa, who has written *a guide to confessors,* says, Clerici rebellio in regem non est crimen læsæ majestatis, *quia non est principi subjectus*.. and again .. Tyrannice gubernans justum acquisitum dominium non potest spoliari sine *publico judicio:* latâ vero sententiâ *potest quisque fieri executor*... Christ says, "My kingdom is not of this world:" the pope says, "My kingdom is." Pius V excited to rebellion all the subjects of Elizabeth: Clement VIII (it is ludicrous to hear the titles of these ruffians) ordered all the Roman-catholics,

preserve it for the union of Christians! Casaubon, it is verily, though we enter thereby into bliss, an

" quantum in ipsis esset, ut post Elizabethæ obitum rex *eligeretur*, omni sanguinis propinquitate spretâ." For this purpose it was requisite that the consciences of men should be modified; and hence arose *mental reservation*, to which all the abominations of all other religions, all even of popery itself, are trifles. Christ says, " Let your discourse be yea, yea; nay, nay:" the jesuit says, supported by the pope, " the speech by equivocation being saved from a lie, the same speech may be without perjury confirmed by oath, or by any other way, though it were by receiving the sacrament, if just necessity so require." Cannot a lie be circuitous? Whatever is said in order to make a man believe an untruth, is a lie; yet a jesuit has no hesitation to swear it upon the sacrament! and princes have no hesitation to let jesuits be the instructors of youth! Falsely, as my quotations prove, have they been called the supporters of thrones: they never support them, but when they can govern from them, by means of deluded or affrighted princes. The papacy is the guardian of governments as a bawd is the guardian of girls; for profit. Antonius Capellus, a Franciscan friar, says, " Indignos esse reges qui ecclesiis suarum ditionum *ullo modo* praesint, quos Deus in Moyse sibi displicere apertè commonstravit." Eudæmono-Johannes, a monk of Crete, a true jesuit, extols the son of the Emperor Henry IV for insulting the dead body of his father, who had been disobedient to the See of Rome. The opinions of these men are not private; they are sanctioned *facultate superiorum*, by the doctors of theology, and by the chancery of the papal court. The spirit of their church has always been and always will be the same, whenever it can exercise its authority; arrogant, intolerant, persecuting, unforgiving. Its poison has been sublimated, and its froth and fumes have been condensed, by the Jesuits, as may further be seen in Mariana and in Escobar, and in the demonstration of their fallacies by Arnaud and Pascal.

ugly thing to die. The malignity of popery may soften. I should be sorry to inflict new pains and penalties.

CASAUBON.

I would not inflict any: I would authorize no inabilities or privations for a difference in mere articles of faith: for instance, it would be tyranny and madness to declare a man incapable of beating the enemy because he believes in transubstantiation: but I would exclude from all power, all trust, all office, whoever should assert that any man has legitimate power of any kind within this realm, unless it repose in, or originate from, the king or parliament or both united. The Council of Trent has defined and settled all the questions at issue in the Roman-catholic creed, so that the popes can pretend to teach nothing new for the future: matters of discipline are likewise fixed. The appointment to ecclesiastical dignities of all degrees may safely be entrusted to the native hierarchy in each kingdom. Your Majesty has then a right to demand, from all your Roman-catholic subjects, that no papal bull, no order, brief, decree, or mandate of any kind hereafter be received in your dominions.

It is singular and anomalous in the political world, that subjects should claim any right of ap-

peal to foren princes; and it is absurd to argue that the appeal is made not to the prince but to the priest, when the person is invested with both characters, and acts in both. He may advise and enlighten; he may also command and *fulminate* ... a favourite designation of one among the supernatural powers which he arrogates to himself from the Divinity. By a less exertion, he might transfuse in a perennial stream his wisdom and his holiness into a succession of bishops: hence all appeals to Rome would be unnecessary. Power is always the more immoderate and the more jealous when it rises out of usurpation; but those who contend for liberty of any kind should in no instance be its abettors. If the popes had been conscientious or decently honest men, if they could have abstained from laughing in their sleeves when they called themselves the successors of Saint Peter, if they could have been contented with his mediocrity of fortune, his dignified and righteous exercise of authority, their influence upon sound consciences, far from being less, would have been greater and more permanent: and neither would rape and incest and the abominations of Lampsacus and Crete have been committed in their closets, under the images of the saints and under the lamp of the Virgin, nor would forbearance

from evil, and activity in good be postponed to frogs and flounders, to horse-hair, hemp, and ashes, or prayers to the dead for the dead.

The Cardinal Bellarmin, unable to confute the slightest of your remonstrances, came forward in his master's name, threw down the key of Peter and took up the sword, cutting short the question between you, and asserting that the king of England was also *in temporals the Pope's feudatory and subject.* After this, according to the constitution, your majesty may declare rebels, all adherents of the pope in any way whatever, all who hold direct or indirect communication with him, all who receive or give intelligence for the furtherance of his machinations and designs.

Among the various religions that have been established in the world, the papal is the only one which insists that a kingdom shall have two *chief* magistrates, that nevertheless one of these shall be *superior* to the other, and that he of right is so, who has never seen the country, never will see it, never had parentage or progeny or land or tenement in it; that a kingdom neither conquered nor hereditary, neither bequeathed nor surrendered by itself, must admit an alien arbitrator whenever it pleases him to raise a question, and that this alien arbitrator shall always give an irreversible verdict in

his own favour; lastly, that a kingdom, to the detriment of its defence, of its agriculture, of its commerce, of its population, of its independence, shall raise a body of men for the service of this intruder, unlimited in number, enormous in expenditure, which he alone shall discipline, he alone shall organize, he alone shall direct and controul. Mahomet left a family, and was far from deficient in impudence, but he wanted the assurance to claim for his own successors what the pretended ones of St. Peter claim for theirs: here however we have somewhat worse than common absurdity, or than common arrogance to contend with . . . A harlot was, not contented with debauching your servants, with getting drunk at your expense, and with picking your pocket every time that you approached her: she became impatient for your purse, and invoked the blessed Virgin to witness that, unless she had it, you should never, as she hoped for salvation, leave the room alive. She now is angry that you have turned her off, complains of your violence and injustice, boasts of her affection and fidelity, pouts, pants, and swells, and swears that neither you nor yours shall enter her house again: Nicodemus asked our Saviour "*how can these things be?*" and his divine instructor heard and answered him with complacency: put the same question on any

subject of doubt to a theophagous pope from some mountain monastery or some suburban lane, and the fellow will illuminate you with a cartful of faggots.

JAMES.

Is it not wonderful that, odious and contemptible as the Italians are to all the other nations of Europe, when hardly the first amongst them, unless it be the son of some Venetian senator, can find access to the family of any gentleman in England, yet an ignorant, vicious, and ferocious priest, covered with filth and vermin, being hailed as another God by some dozens of the same cast, instantly treats kings as his inferiors and subjects, and is obeyed in a country like this, highminded, free, and enlightened? Is there anything more irrational or more humiliating in the worship of the Dalai-Lama? Far otherwise: he is innocent, gentle, and beneficent, no murderer, no applauder of murders*, no plunderer, no extortioner, no

* Medals were coined by order of Gregory XIII to commemorate the massacre of Saint Bartholomew's day: on one side is the pope, on the other is the massacre. He commanded it also to be painted in the Vatican, where the painting still exists. In popes no atrocity is marvellous or remarkable; but how painful is it to find a scholar like Muretus commending and applauding a massacre! The following words are part of an oration addressed by him to Gregory, in the name of Charles IX, on the celebration of this truly French festival.

vender of pardons, no dealer in dispensations, no forestaller and regrater of manna from heaven or of palms from paradise, no ringdropper of sacraments, no scourer of incests, no forger, no betrayer.

O noctem illam memorabilem, et in fastis eximiæ alicujus notæ adjectione signandam, quæ *paucorum seditiosorum* interitu regem a præsenti cædis periculo, regnum a perpetuâ civilium bellorum formidine, liberavit! Quâ quidem nocte stellas equidem ipsas luxisse solito nitidiùs arbitror, et flumen Sequanam majores undas volvisse, quò citiùs illa impurorum hominum cadavera evolveret et exoneraret in mare! O felicissimam mulierum Catharinam regis matrem! &c.

Such are the expressions of Muretus, as the most agreeable he could deliver, to the successor of him who proclaimed *on earth peace, good will towards men*. This language of Charity had been corrected by Infallibility, and altered to "pax hominibus.. bonæ voluntatis:" terms on which a massacre is a commentary.

The only good performed by monarchs in two thousand years, are the abolition of the jesuits and of the inquisition, which must however be considered as merely the dismissal of old servants grown insolent. In the period of their continuance more mischief has been done to mankind by the catholic religion, not only than by all the other religions that have existed in the world, but than by all the other causes of evil put together. The jesuits taught youth, but only to a certain and very circumscribed extent, and their principal dogma was, the legitimacy of falsehood: hence knowledge and virtue have suffered more from the jesuits, than from the most profligate and ignorant of the other confraternities. The catholic religion is the cause, we are informed, why sculpture and painting were revived: it is more certainly the cause why they have made no progress, and why they have been employed on most ignoble objects; on scourgers and hangmen, on beggarly

O Casaubon, I blush to reflect that dissimulation is necessary to the maintenance of peace. A rotten rag covers worse rottenness: remove it, and half the world is tainted with infidelity. In England, in Holland, in any country where laws are equitable and morals pure, how often would these *Eminences* and *Holinesses* have clasped the whipping-post, and with how much more fervency than they clasp the cross! Bellarmin must have been convinced: he must have struggled against his conscience: heated with that conflict, he advances but the more outrageously against me.

CASAUBON.

Bellarmin throws all your arguments into the fire, and assumes a fiercer attitude, not from any resentment at being convinced, for that he was long before, but on the principle that, when we are tired of parrying, we thrust. Your Majesty has now a declared competitor for the throne. Parliament will provide, if the statute of queen

enthusiasts and base impostors. Look at the two masterpieces of the pencil; the Transfiguration of Raphael and the St. Jerome of Correggio: can anything be more incongruous, any thing more contrary to truth and history? I am persuaded that the little town of Sicyon produced a greater number of great artists in both arts than all the modern world. In landscape only, where superstition has no influence, are the moderns to be thought on a level with the ancients. Claude and Titian were probably not excelled.

Elizabeth is insufficient, the means necessary to maintain your possession. On the compliance of your Roman-catholic subjects with such conservatory statutes, nothing can be so unjust or so needless, as to exclude from the rights of citizenship, or from the dignities of state, a body of men who believe not differently from your Majesty, but more.

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Casaubon here finished his discourse, and James made no further observation. Such was his simplicity, he really had imagined that reason and truth, urged so forcibly by him, would alter the system and conciliate the goodwill of the papal court, and that it would resign a wide dominion for a weighty argument. He stroked his beard, licked softly the extremities of his whiskers, ejaculated, sighed, and sate down quietly. He was, notwithstanding, in a frame of mind capable of receiving with satisfaction whatever could derogate from the dignity of the Roman-catholic rites, when Archibald Pringle, one of his pages, entered the apartment.

"Archy," said his Majesty, who was fond of such abbreviations, "I remember to have chidden

you for a wicked little story you told me last winter, touching a Japonese at Rouen. Come now, if you can divest it of all irreverence, I would fain hear it repeated. I think it a subject for the disquisition of my bishops, whether the pagan sinned or not, or whether, if he sinned, his faith was of such a nature as to atone for it."

Such were really, if not the first thoughts, those however which now arose in the king's mind . . . The page thus began his narration.

A young Japonese was brought over to Rouen on the day of Pentecoste. He had expressed in the voyage a deep regret at the death of the chaplain, who might have instructed him in the mysteries, and who, the only time he conversed with him, recommended to him zealously and with *unction*, as the French say, the worship of the living God. He was constant in his desire to be edified, and immediately on his debarcation was conducted to the cathedral. He observed the elevation of the Hoste with imperturbable devotion, and an utter indifference to the flattering whispers of the fairest among the faithful . . such as, "O the sweet jonquil-coloured skin! O the pretty piercing black eyes! O the charming long twisted tail! and how finely those flowers and birds and butterflies are painted upon his trowsers!

and look at that leopard in the centre! it seems alive."

When the service was over, and the Archbishop was mounting his carriage-step, he ran after him, and bit him gently with eyes half-closed, by the calf of the leg. Vociferations were raised by the attendants, the soldiers, and the congregation, ill accordant with sanctity, and wronging the moral character and pious disposition of the Japonese. These however the good prelate quieted, by waving his hand and smiling with affability. The neophyte was asked what induced him to bite the archbishop by the leg. He answered, that he wished to pay the living God the same reverence and adoration, as the living God had paid the dead one.

"See now," cried James, "the result of proclaiming that the pope is God upon earth. It led this poor heathen, who amid such splendour and prostrations might well mistake an archbishop for a pope, to the verge of an abyss, dark, precipitous, and profound, as any that superstition hath opened in his own deplorable country."

# CONVERSATION IX.

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## MARCHESE PALLAVICINI

AND

## WALTER LANDOR.

# MARCHESE PALLAVICINI

AND

# WALTER LANDOR.

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At Albaro near Genoa I rented the palace of Marchese Pallavicini. While he was presenting the compliments on my arrival, the wife of his bailiff brought me fish and fowl from the city, and poured upon the table a basketful of fine fruit.

LANDOR.

The walk has tired you, my good woman. The hill indeed is rather steep, but it is short, and you appear, like the generality of Genoese country-women, strongly built.

PALLAVICINI.

She has been frightened. When the Neapolitans and English landed here in the bay, she was in childbed.

LANDOR.

Poor woman! the alarm must have been great

indeed, before you knew that the general was an Englishman.

"Ah, sir!" was all she replied.

Signor marchese, do inform me what she means.

PALLAVICINI.

Sir, it is better for all parties to forget the calamities of war, which always are the greatest in the most beautiful countries.

LANDOR.

Indulge me however in my request. Curiosity is pardonable in a stranger, and, led by humanity, is admissible to confidence.

PALLAVICINI.

You had begun, sir, to say something which interested me, in reply to my inquiry how you liked our scenery. I shall derive much more satisfaction from your remarks on our architecture and gardens, than you can derive from my recital of any inhumanity. It is fair and reasonable, and in the course of things, that we should first arrive at that which may afford us pleasure, and not flag towards it wearied and saddened, and incapable of its enjoyment.

LANDOR.

I am pleased, as I observed, by the palace before us, not having seen in Italy, until now, a house of any kind with a span of turf before it.

Like yours and your neighbour's, they generally encroach on some lane, following its windings and angles, lest a single inch of ground should be lost; and the roofs fight for the center of the road. If an Italian spends a livre, he must be seen to spend it: his stables, his laundry, his domestics, his peasants, must strike the eye together: his pigstie must have witnesses like his will. Every tree is accursed, as that of which the holy cross was fabricated, and must be swept away. You are surely the most hospitable people in the world: even that edifice which derives its existence and its name from privacy, stands exposed and wide-open to the stranger.

When I resided on the Lake of Como, I visited the palace of Marchese Odescalchi. Before it swelled in majesty that sovran of inland waters; behind it was a pond surrounded with brickwork, in which about twenty young goldfish jostled and gaped for room. The Larius had sapped the foundations of his palace, and the marchese had exerted all his genius to avenge himself: he composed this bitter parody. I inquired of his cousin Don Pepino, who conducted me, when the roof would be put on. He looked at me, doubting if he understood me, and answered in a gentle tone,

"It was finished last summer." My error originated from observing red pantiles, kept in their places by heavy stones, loose, and laid upon them irregularly.

"What a beautiful swell, Don Pepino, is this upon the right," exclaimed I. "The little hill seems sensible of pleasure as he dips his foot into the Larius."

"There will be the offices."

"What! and hide Grumello? Let me enjoy the sight while I can. He appears instinct with life. How he nods the network of vines upon his head beckoning and inviting us, while the figtrees and mulberries and chesnuts and walnuts, and those lofty and eternal cypresses, stand waiting and immoveable around. His playfellows beyond, all different in form and features, push forward; and, if there is not something in the motion of the air, or something in my eyesight, illusory, they are running a race along the borders... Stop a moment: how shall we climb over those two enormous pines? Ah, Don Pepino! old trees in their living state are the only things that money cannot command. Palaces and temples and aqueducts and amphitheatres rise up before it readily: but it must either wait, or pass away before venera-

ble trees. What a sweet odour is there! whence comes it? Sweeter it appears to me and stronger than of the pine itself." "I imagine, said he, from the linden-tree; yes certainly."

"Is that a linden? It is the largest, and, I should imagine, the oldest upon earth, if I could perceive that it had lost any of its branches."

"Pity, that it hides half the row of yon houses from the palace! It will be carried off with the two pines in the autumn."

PALLAVICINI.

I would gladly see that Lake, which detained you three whole years amongst a people so rude and barbarous.

LANDOR.

Barbarous is that city, think you, which contains two families of friends? It was in Como I received the brave descendants of the Jovii, and my bosom feels at this moment that there I pressed to it the calm philosophical Sironi. I must love that city too for other recollections. Thither came to visit me the learned and modest Bekker, and it was there I shed my last tear when I said farewell to Southey.

PALLAVICINI.

Our cities are in much better taste than our villas.

LANDOR.

They are superb, and appear the more so after the wretched towns of France. In that country almost every thing animated is noisy, and almost every thing inanimate is mis-shapen. All seems reversed: the women have hoarse voices; the men squeal. The children, and the very dogs and frogs, are more clamourous than ours; the cocks are shriller. On the staircases, as here, the more decent do that which the less decent do at the corner of the streets. In Italy we cannot walk ten paces without observing the union of magnificence and filth, of gorgeous finery and squalid meanness. The churches are fairly divided between piety and prostitution, leaving the entrance and a few broken chairs to beggary and vermin. There always is something of misapplied paint and importunate gilding. A couple of pepper-boxes are mounted on St. Peter's; a dozen of mass-boxes range the Colosseo; the Pantheon is the tomb of a fiddler.

Enter the gardens, and approach the vases: do you perceive the rarity, the beauty, the fragrance of the flowers? In one is a bush of box, in another a knot of tansey: Neptune stands in a parterre of cabbages, and from the shell of a Triton sprout three turnips... to be sold.

We English in our gardens, the most beautiful in the universe, are not exempt from absurdities*.

*In the shadiness of the English garden, it is the love of retirement that triumphs over taste, and over a full sense and experience of its inconveniences.

SEPTIMIUS.

Probum piumque ego ex ephebo noveram
Septimium; at illud in viri virtutibus
Primum juvabat, quod casam, quod hortulum
Describeret parentum amore ludicro,
Locoque fratrum buxeas imagines
Complecteretur, toto aperto pectore.
Invisere istas cogitabam sæpius,
Sciens eundem hunc esse, mitis indolis,
Vitæque agresti non agrestem deditum.
Odium quod in me est, et fuit semper, domûs
Alienæ ob hoc repello, et evinco brevi...
Anquiro ubi ædes Septimî..." vides," ait
Herbas salubres colligens vicina anus.
*Dico paternas, quasque Septimius colit,*
*Cerasus caminum contegit, laurus forem.*
"Verum... ecce easdem!"
Non moror diutiùs
Quin tortuosam carpo et insequor viam;
En ipse! jussa fortè villico dabat
Quo tortuosa tortuosior foret
Via illa, quærerentque fallentem domum
Fenestrâ apertâ quærere auditi hospites.
Benignitate pristinâ concurritur...
*At buxus, O mî Septimî! quonam loco,*
*Arcus, sagittæ?*
"Jure ridenda optimo"
Respondit...
*Atqui non meâ sententiâ*
*Ridendus ulli est ullus innocentiæ*

Inhabiting a moist and chilly climate, we draw our woods almost into our dining-rooms: you, in-

*Custosve, testisve; hæc videre pervelim,*
*Istasque fructu amisque convexas nuces,*
*Sub queis repertus semimortuus lepus*
*Cruore primis jam rigente naribus,*
*Causa ambigendi seriis parentibus*
*An edere fas nefasne, tam incertâ nece.*
*Illuc eamus protinus.*
Prensat manum,
Suspirat... "eruuntur!"
*Ut fit?*
"Atqui ita est!"
*Bellam fatebor reddidisti villulam.*
*Munit recurvum certiùs ferrum gradus*
*Quam ros marinus, nec fides huic abfuit,*
*Annos ducentos usque servanti locum;*
*Sed quæso, amice Septimi, magis placet*
*Priore? nec quid inter hæc desideras?*
"Immo omnia! et me poenitet facti mei
Et poenitebit: hostis haud tantum malum
Inferret: hunc ornare gestibam situm;
Ipsum sepulchrum primi amoris obrui."

The neighbourhood of Genoa produces a great quantity of lemons, and many families are supported by renting, at about thirty crowns, an acre or less of lemon ground. I mentioned the fact at Pisa, with some doubt and hesitation, and there I learned from Don Luigi Serviti and Signor Georgio Salvioni, both gentlemen of Massa di Carrara, the following most extraordinary fertility of a lemon tree. A wager was laid in the year 1812 by Signor Antonio Georgieri of Massa with Marchese Calani of Spezia, that, at Croscello, half a mile from the former place, there was one which would mature that year fourteen thousand lemons. It exceeded the quantity. In Spain I was informed that a large tree in favorable seasons

habiting a sultry one, condemn your innocent children to the ordeal of a red-hot gravel.

I have now, signor marchese, performed the conditions you imposed on me, to the extent of my observation; hastily, I confess it, and preoccupied by the interest you excited.

PALLAVICINI.

Across the road, exactly four paces from your antechamber, were the quarters of your general: exactly forty-eight from his window, out of which he was looking, did this peasant woman lie groaning with labour, when several soldiers entered her bedroom, and carried off the articles most necessary in her condition. Her husband ran under the window of the general, which faced the wife's, entreating his compassion. He was driven away.

LANDOR.

Was nothing done?

PALLAVICINI.

A few threats were added.

might ripen three thousand; in Sicily the same, or nearly so. The fruit however of the tree at Croscello is small, of little juice, and bad quality. I presume it to be a wilding. This and the celebrated vine at Hampton-Court are the two most extraordinary fruit-bearing trees on record; they have quintupled the most prolific of their species in Europe.

LANDOR.

Impossible, impossible!

PALLAVICINI.

Since, sir, we are in the regions of impossibility, do look again, I entreat you, at the palace just before us: and I am greatly mistaken if I cannot fix your attention upon something of higher import than a span of turf.

LANDOR.

It is among the most magnificent and, what is better, the most elegant, that I have hitherto seen in Italy; for I have not yet visited the Venetian territory, and know merely from engravings the admirable architecture of Palladio. Whose is it?

PALLAVICINI.

It belongs to the family of Cambiagi, to which our republic, while it pleased God to preserve it, owed many signal benefits, as doges and as senators. In the latter capacity a private man from amongst them constructed at his own expense the most commodious of our roads, and indeed the first deserving the name that had ever been formed in Liguria, whether by the moderns or ancients.

LANDOR.

How grand is that flight of steps upon which the children are playing! These are my vases, marchese, these are my images, this is ornamental

gardening, these are decorations for architecture. Take care, blessed creatures, a fall from such a highth!....

PALLAVICINI.

Over those steps, amidst the screams and embraces of those children, with her arms tied behind her, imploring help, pity, mercy, was dragged by the hair the marchesa Cambiagi.

LANDOR.

For what offence?

PALLAVICINI.

Because her husband had mastered all his prejudices, and resigned all his privileges.

LANDOR.

Signor marchese, the English general, whatever may be the public opinion of his talents, his principles, and his conduct, could never have known and permitted it.

PALLAVICINI.

Perhaps not. I can only declare that his windows were filled with military men, if uniforms make them, and that he was amongst them. This I saw. Your Houses of Parliament, M. Landor, for their own honour, for the honour of the service and of the nation, should have animadverted on such an outrage: he should answer for it: he should suffer for it.

LANDOR.

These two fingers have more power, marchese, than those two houses. A pen! he shall live for it. What, with their animadversions, can they do like this?

# CONVERSATION X.

## GENERAL KLEBER

AND SOME

## FRENCH OFFICERS.

# GENERAL KLEBER

AND SOME

# FRENCH OFFICERS.

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An English officer was sitting with his back against the base of the great Pyramid. He sometimes looked towards those of elder date and ruder materials before him, sometimes was absorbed in thought, and sometimes was observed to write in a pocket-book with great rapidity.

"If he were not writing," said a French naturalist to a young ensign, "I should imagine him to have lost his eyesight by the ophthalmia. He does not see us: level your rifle: we cannot find a greater curiosity."

The Arts prevailed: the officer slided with extended arms from his restingplace: the blood, running from his breast, was audible as a swarm of insects in the sand. No other sound was

heard. Powder had exploded; life had passed away; not a vestige remained of either.

"Let us examine his papers," said the naturalist.

"Pardon me, sir," answered the ensign; "my first enquiry on such occasions is *what's o'clock?* and afterwards I pursue my mineralogical researches."

At these words he drew forth the dead man's watch, and stuck it into his sash, while with the other hand he snatched out a purse, containing some zecchins: every part of the dress was examined, and not quite fruitlesly.

"See! a locket with a miniature of a young woman!" Such it was . . . a modest and lovely countenance.

"Ha! ha!" said the ensign; "a few touches, a very few touches, I can give them, and Adèle will take this for me. Two inches higher, and the ball had split it . . . what a thoughtless man he was! There is gold in it too: it weighs heavy. Pest! an old woman at the back! grey as a cat."

It was the officer's mother, in her old age, as he had left her. There was something of sweet piety, not unsaddened by presage, in the countenance. He severed it with his knife, and threw

it into the bosom of her son. Two foreign letters and two pages in pencil were the contents of the pocket-book. Two locks of hair had fallen out: one rested on his eyelashes, for the air was motionless, the other was drawn to the earth by his blood.

The papers were taken to General Kleber by the naturalist and his associate, with a correct recital of the whole occurrence, excepting the appendages of watch, zecchins, and locket.

"Young man," said Kleber, gravely, "is this a subject of merriment to you? Who knows whether you or I may not be deprived of life as suddenly and unexpectedly? He was not your enemy: perhaps he was writing to a mother or sister. God help them! these suffer most from war. The heart of the far-distant is the scene of its most cruel devastations. Leave the papers: you may go: call the interpreter."

He entered.

"Read this letter."

*My adored Henry . . .*

"Give it me," cried the general; he blew a strong fire from his pipe and consumed it.

"Read the other."

*My kind-hearted and beloved son . . .*

"Stop: read the last line only."

The interpreter answered, "It contains merely the name and address."

"I asked no questions: read them, and write them down legibly."

He took the paper, tore off the margin, and placed the line in his snuffbox.

"Give me that paper in pencil, with a mark of sealingwax on it."

He snatched it, shrunk, and shook some tobacco on it. It was no sealingwax. It was a drop of blood; one from the heart; one only; dry, but seeming fresh.

"Read."

*Yes, my dear mother, the greatest name that exists among mortals is that of Sydney. He who now bears it in the front of battle, could not succour me: I had advanced too far: I am, however, no prisoner. Take courage, my too fond mother: I am amongst the Arabs, who detest the French: they liberated me. They report, I know not upon what authority, that Bonaparte has deserted his army, and escaped from Egypt.*

"Stop instantly," cried Kleber, rising. "Gentlemen," added he to his staffofficers, "my duty obliges me to hear this unbecoming language on your late commander in chief: retire you a few moments ... Continue."

*He hates every enemy according to his courage and his virtues: he abominates what he cannot debase, at home or abroad*.*

* Whoever is about to describe the character of some remarkable man, considers first how much invention and acuteness he can display, and secondly how best he can bring into order and congruity, or what the painters call *keeping*, his observations and reflections. For which reason, it rarely has happened that we carry in our mind from these writers a resemblance that is not illusory or overcharged. In all great men there are discordances, as there are inequalities in all great substances. It is only from a collection of facts, generally too minute to be conveyed in the paniers from which public curiosity is fed, that we are enabled to judge fairly and fully.

There is little perfect truth in the most sagacious of historians, and little pure love of it in the best of men. We are as unwilling to exchange our thoughts for another's as our children, whatever more they may possess of strength or beauty; and the way to conciliate our suffrages is not by dictating and teaching, but by laying before us evidences and testimonies, by collecting what may corroborate them from circumstances, and by raising us to the dignity of judges. The ancients drew characters; we discourse on them.. a much easier matter.. every thing now is compendious and economical: we make soups from bones, and histories from metaphysics.

Bonaparte seems to me the most extraordinary of mortals; because I am persuaded that so much power was never acquired by another with so small an exertion of genius, and so little of any thing that captivates the affections; or maintained so long unbroken in a succession of such enormous faults, such scandalous disgraces, such disastrous failures and defeats. I investigate him with the same dispassionate attention, as Lacepède would the spine of a serpent from Surinam or Cuvier the jaws of a mammoth from the Ontario.

"Oh!" whispered Kleber to himself, "he knows the man so well!"

All persons who are elevated to high rank, however modest and virtuous, assume more or less of a fictitious character, but congenial and agnate, if I may say it, with the former. Bonaparte would be whatever he had last read or heard of... Brutus or Borgia, Frederick or Charlemagne. All appeared best that were most striking no matter for what; and not only a book whenever it fell in his way, or a story when he had patience to listen to it, but even a new suit of cloaths, changed him suddenly. If his hair had been clipped in the morning, he was at noon a Marius, at night a Sylla: no sooner had he put on a court-dress, than he took a lesson of dancing; for Louis XIV danced; no sooner the uniform of a marshall, than he tried to sing; for Villars sang.

Whoever is an imitator, by nature, choice, or necessity, has nothing stable: the flexibility which affords this aptitude, is incompatible with strength.

Bonaparte's knowledge of chorography, to which many attribute a certain part of his successes, was extremely limited. In a conversation with Count Giovio at Como*, a few days after the Austrians had first abandoned Milan, he inquired whether the Larius ran into the lagunes of Mantua. The memory of this excellent man is still fresh in the memory of his fellow citizens and friends: no one ever doubted his veracity. So long ago as the year 1796, in which his relation was published, he stated that Bonaparte, in his first campaign, had permitted or ordered his sick and wounded, past service, not to be carried to the hospitals or entrusted to the care of the religious and beneficent, but to be left on the field, or killed, or thrown into the rivers. He informs us that many, on somewhat recovering from their lamentable state, went mad from thirst and hunger, and that among those who were cast into the water, the hands of many, as they clung in agony to the barks, were broken.

* Published by Ostinelli, Como, 1796.

*The first then are Nelson and Sir Sydney Smith. Their friends could expect no mercy at*

Fortunate! not he who can restrain his indignation or his tears at this recital; but he who, turning his eyes upon a Sidney, as he waves away the water from his own parched lips to the wounded soldier near him, can say, *This was my countryman, that my enemy.*

Much hath been repeated of the studious and retired habits of his youth. I had inquired into these matters, long before I read the little narrative I have quoted; the inquiry would otherwise have been superfluous; for no very studious man was ever very cruel; no two things in nature have less affinity than violence and reflection. M. St. Leger, lieutenant-colonel of the regiment in which he was ensign, told me that he never, at that period, had heard of his progress in any branch of the mathematics; that he was chiefly remarkable for the dirtiness of his hands and linen, his vulgar pronunciation and phrases, his aversion to the society of the officers, and his propensity towards the least respectable of the privates. This also would have been corrected by study. If Pompey had read like Cesar, he might not indeed have possessed the clemency and amenity of that most accomplished man, nor have been in any respect worthy to be called his rival, but he would certainly have been less contracted and self-sufficient, less unsteady and impatient, less vindictive and ferocious.

I remember no general, worthy of the name, reviling the character of those military men who performed their duty against him: for Cesar in his *Anti-Cato* did not attack the captain, but the senator and the patriot. Bonaparte left unuttered no term of ungovernable rage and vulgar contumely, when Sir Sydney Smith precluded him from the conquest of Europe by his defence of Acre.

Spannochi, governor of Leghorn, refused to open the gates to him, then at peace with the Granduke. Intending a surprize, he had made a forced march, and expecting no re-

*his hands. If the report be any thing better than an Arabian tale, I will surrender myself to*

sistence he had brought no cannon with him. He summoned the governor to surrender the town and citadel, who refused both the one and the other until he had orders from Florence. They arrived the next day, and the brave Spannochi was exiled to Sienna, but not before the allie of the Granduke had cursed him, called him by that appellation so familiar to the lower French, seized his epaulette, spit upon him, and kicked his shin. History for her own sake must soften some characters and equivocate on some facts. She treads confidently and firmly upon blood, she follows her clue unhesitatingly through all the labyrinths of mystery and of crime, she is embarassed only by vulgarity and baseness. We feel a deep interest whenever great masses of mankind are moved, and seldom think or are altogether ignorant what trifling things are the movers.

Bonaparte was invidious of the dead almost to the same degree as of the living: one time he asserted that Marlborough owed his successes to Eugene, another that Eugene owed his to Marlborough; and any officer would have been ruined who had suggested, that Marlborough was not present at the battle of Belgrade. In a conversation at Varese, just before his visit to Como, he appears to have mistaken Gustavus Adolphus for Charles XII. On hearing that the army of Gustavus had penetrated into Italy by the lake of Como, of which a terrific account is given in the Latin letters of Sigismund Boldoni, he denied the fact, and added ... "*That madman never thought about Italy: he had other affairs, other interests; he was sans tactique, sans calcul.*" And yet Napoleon in his youth was an historian. He shewed his manuscript to Paoli: it was such as might have been expected from an admirer of Ossian. Paoli, not long before his death, mentioned the fact at Clifton, and said he believed the young man had never pardoned the freedom of his advice, in recommending that the

*his successor as prisoner of war, and perhaps may be soon exchanged. How will this little leaf reach you? God knows how and when!*

work should be delayed a little, until the impetuosity of his genius had subsided. I should have imagined that the sentences were short, as from the tripod; the General said that, on the contrary, they were excessively verbose, strangely metaphorical, without any regard to punctuation, or rather to that upon which punctuation is founded; that, when you had come, as you believed, to the end of your march, you were to start again; and often, on setting out, you were suddenly stopt and countermanded.

His discipline hath been extolled, and examples are cited of soldiers, in every campaign, shot for petty thefts. To avoid all examination into the wealth of his dukes and princes, such as Cambaceres, Fouchè, Talleyrand, Torlonia, and several of his marshals and *grand dignitaries*, the General Mouton, when he dined at the Escurial, which he did every day, with the king and queen of Spain, took away the plate after dinner, until none was left. This fact, reported to me in the country where it occurred, has been since confirmed to me at Florence, by my friend cavaliere Galiano, who sate regularly at the same table and was chamberlain to the king.

Whatever in different men may have been the difference of punishment for the same offence, where society was interested; however it may have been permitted by special privilege that he who had renounced the deity might renounce the laws, that he who had abjured the bishop might supersede the citizen, all offences were equally unpardonable which were committed against Napoleon. Another proof of a weak intellect: not that forgiveness is any proof of a strong one. Offences that can be pardoned should never be taken: Bonaparte took them indiscriminately and voraciously, as his food. There is no trouble or address in finding them, and in shewing them there is no wisdom or content.

His ideas of a ruling star present a still more signal indi-

"Is there nothing else to examine?"

"One more leaf."

"Read it."

cation of a vacillating and ill-composed mind. He knew nothing of judicial astrology, which hath certain laws assigned to it, and fancied he could unite it with atheism, as easily as the iron crown with the lilies; not considering that ruling stars themselves must have a ruler, and must obey, far more certainly than they can indicate, his designs and will. Afterwards he laid by the star, and took up the crucifix to play with; on which some sweeter recollections and more delightful hopes might have reposed, if ever he could have brought himself to the persuasion, that either a man or a god would suffer pain, or disseminate good, gratuitously. In the same manner and degree as he was inconsistent in principle he was irresolute in action. He lost his presence of mind when he advanced to dissolve the representatives of the people; he lost it at the battle of Marengo; and when the allies were marching into Paris, he appeared to be deprived, not of his judgement only and his senses, but of locomotion. In one thing he was singular, and altogether different from every other man; when he had accomplished his design, he was as fond of appearing dishonest as he was satisfied with having been so: he was the only pickpocket in the world that ever laid before the people the instruments of his trade, and shewed ostentatiously how he had used them. Indeed he had few secrets to keep. He invaded the territory of nations, to whom any possible change might reasonably appear a gainful speculation. Neither force nor fraud, nor bribery itself, however largely and judiciously administered, subverted the continental states: it was effected by the credulity of their hopes and the incapacity of their rulers. His attack was against the cabinet; those within cried for quarter, gave a province or two for a ransom, kept their places resolutely, (who would abandon them in times so *critical?*) complimented their master, rang their church-

*Written in England on the battle of Aboukir.*

Land of all marvels in all ages past,
Egypt, I hail thee from a far-off shore;
I hail thee, doom'd to rise again at last,
And flourish, as in early youth, once more.

---

bells, fired their jubilee-cannon, if one was left, for, after so fierce a contest with an enemy so powerful, they had surrendered only... their country. Austria and Prussia fell; they had kings and king's servants within: Spain and Portugal, unsuspicious, unprepared, undisciplined, unarmed, resisted succesfully; their kings and king's servants stood without. Where there are interests, real or apparent, distinct from those of the community, *that*, whatever it be, wherein they lie, should be shoveled down and carried off; for there is the ground upon which the enemy will mount his first masked battery. Everywhere kings and oligarchies soon seconded Bonaparte; nations spurned and expelled him. Of his fidelity or infidelity towards his allies, I have nothing here to remark, other than that, from whatever motive, he did greatly and incomparably more service, to several who had fought against him, and, after discomfiture and subjugation, had become his friends, than some governments, who boast loudly of their good faith and generosity, to the most faithful and persevering of their confederates. I have truly no leisure for discoursing, and could excite no interest if I did, on princes first degraded into crimp-sergeants, then caparisoned like cooks and ostlers for billets and relays, then running the gauntlet, and drummed from their dominions; on princes in short who felt, and whose conduct has made others feel, that even this was clemency. The description of tyrants is at least a stirring thing: it is like walking over red-hot ploughshares, and the vulgar are not the first in pressing on to an exhibition so strange and antiquated. Bonaparte had perhaps the fewest virtues and the faintest semblances of them, of any man that has risen by his own efforts to supreme power: and yet the

How long hast thou lain desolate! how long
The voice of gladness in thy halls hath ceast!
Mute, e'en as Memnon's lyre, the poet's song,
And half-supprest the chaunt of cloister'd priest.

---

services he rendered to society, incommensurate as they were with the prodigious means he possessed, were great, manifold, and extensive. Never had been such good laws so well administered over so considerable a portion of Europe: never was right obtained with so moderate a cost, never was injury so speedily redressed. Two of the bravest and most orderly nations of the continent received the benefit of excellent kings at his hands. Bernadotte and Louis Bonaparte, the most upright men of their order, gave no signs, either by violence or rapacity, by insolence or falsehood, that they had been nurtured in the feverish bosom of the French Republic. By his insatiate love of change, by his impatience to *see* any thing, or to *be* any thing, long together, his mild, intelligent, and virtuous brother, was forced to abdicate a throne, which he mounted amidst the curses of the people and descended amidst their tears. That he might not be an oppressor he ceased to be a king; and his short unquiet reign is mentioned with gratitude, by the most republican and least sensitive members of the great European family.

Instead of scoring maps and shifting kings, Napoleon could have effected more than Henry IV designed. The road was paved for him with well-broken materials and well rolled over. There was hardly a statesman in Europe of capacity enough to direct a workhouse, or write a fair copy of a washerwoman's bill. Energy was extinct upon the continent: in England it was displayed by the crazy fanatics, who wandered from field to marketplace, from marketplace to field, roaring to the people that they were damned; a truth which indeed they might have discovered by themselves, if they had only put their hands into their pockets. While, as Kleber says in the Dialogue, *throughout the whole territory of France, throughout the range of all her new dominions, not a single man of abilities was neg-*

Even he, loquacious as a vernal bird,
Love, in thy plains and in thy groves is dumb,
Nor on thy thousand Nilefed streams is heard
The reed that whispers happier days to come.

---

*lected,* in England son succeeded to father in the oligarchy, and expeditions were formed just weighty and durable enough to give fortunes to those who had squandered them. Of our generals, the most distinguished then employed was a body that rose from bed after midday; of which when orders were requested, the first answer was, *his lordship is at breakfast;* the second, *his lordship is at lunch;* the third, *his lordship is at dinner.* He and a part of his army returned home. The armament had been directed, first against an island, where fevers are as periodical as rains under the tropics, and ultimately against a fortified city: neither the climate of the one nor the strength of the other was known by the wisest of the ministers, although there is hardly a ginshop in St. Giles, where some smugler or smugler's boy might not have been found, who could have given the information. The want of it seemed so shameful, that one of the ministry, in that hurry and confusion of intellect which involve all his words and actions, said in parliament "*that he knew it; but that he wished to let his colleague have his own way*".. forgetting that the deference cost the nation an army, and heedless that it cost her a disgrace. His colleague was angry, some say ashamed, and was determined to show that, if he was unfit to direct a council, he was not unable to direct a pistol; a far higher qualification in his country. The choice of the commander was more easily defended; no member of the cabinet blushed at that.

I have dwelt the longer on these characters, from the same principle as the sight, after rocks, ruins, and precipices, reposes upon a flat surface though fen or quagmire. On Bonaparte I have thrown together my materials as I caught them from him, not wishing to represent a whole, where no whole existed: he was courtier and postilion, sage and assassin, quicker than the pen could trace the words. He never was observed

O'er cities shadowing some dread name divine
Palace and fane return the hyena's cry,
And hoofless camels in long single line
Stalk slow, with foreheads level to the sky.

---

in a moment of highly bad or highly good humour, without expressing it by some boisterous sally of ill-breeding. Even those who had seen him daily, and knew him well, stood in astonishment sometimes at the discrepancy between his language and his office, at the disparity between the action of his hands and his embroidered mantle. Be it remembered, that, if I have represented him as a thing not luminous in itself, I have forborne to represent him as one in which all light is absorbed, or upon which none can fall. He did both greater evil and greater good than all the other potentates of his time united: the larger part of the evil he did, they perpetuate, and nearly all the good they abolish. Priestcraft and oligarchy, the two worst of curses, are restored throughout Europe, and royalets are only plucked forth from under his coop, to be encaged and hoodwinked by their old decoy-men. After taking up, from one side and the other of this strange phenomenon, the brighter parts and the darker, in as just proportions as I could,

Treis imbris torti radios, treis nubis aquosæ,

I would divert the public mind from dissatisfaction at the present, by shewing in brief retrospect the last example of his selfishness. In the retreat from Moscow he provided only for his own security: the famished and the wounded were without protection. Those, to the amount of forty thousand, who supplied the army with occasional food by distant and desperate excursions, were uninformed of its retreat: they perished to a man, and caused to perish by their disappearance a far greater number of their former comrades. Forty miles of road were excavated in the snow. The army seemed a phantasmagoria: no sound of horses feet was heard, no wheel of waggon or artillery, no voice of man. Regiment followed regiment in long and broken lines, between two files of sol-

No errant outcast of a lawless isle,
Mocker of heaven and earth, with vows and prayers,
Comes thy confiding offspring to beguile,
And rivet to his wrist the chain he wears.

---

diers the whole way. Some stood erect, some reclined a little, some had laid their arms beside them, some clasped them; all were dead. Several of these had slept in that position, but the greater part had been placed so, to leave the more room, and not a few, from every troop and detachment, took their voluntary station amongst them. The barbarians, who at other seasons rush into battle with loud cries, rarely did so. Skins covered not their bodies only but their faces, and, such was the intensity of cold, they reluctantly gave vent, from amidst the spoils they had taken, to this first and most natural expression of their vengeance. Their spears, although often of soft wood, as the beech, the birch, the pine, remained unbroken, while the sword and sabre of the adversary cracked like ice. Feeble from inanition, inert from weariness, and somnolent from the iciness that enthralled them, they sank into forgetfulness with the Cossacks in pursuit and coming down upon them, and even while they could yet discern, for they looked more frequently to that quarter, the more fortunate of their comrades marching home. The gay and lively Frenchman, to whom war had been sport and pastime, was now reduced to such apathy, that, in the midst of some kind speech which a friend was to communicate to those he loved the most tenderly, he paused from rigid drowsiness, and bade the messenger adieu. Some, it is reported (and what is unnatural is, in such extremity, not incredible) closed their eyes and threw down their muskets, while they could use them still, not from hope nor from fear, but part from indignation at their general, whose retreats had always been followed by the total ruin of his army; and part, remembering with what brave nations they had once fought gloriously, from the impossibility of defeating or resisting so barbarous and obscure an enemy.

Britain speaks now .. her thunder thou hast heard ..
Conqueror in every land, in every sea;
Valour and Truth proclaim the Almighty word,
And all thou ever hast been, thou shalt be.

"Defender and passionate lover of thy country," cried Kleber, "thou art less unfortunate than thy auguries. Enthusiastic Englishman, to which of thy conquests have ever been imparted the benefits of thy laws? Thy governors have not even communicated their language to their vassals. Nelson and Sydney are illustrious names: the vilest have often been preferred to them, and severely have they been punished for the importunity of their valour. We Frenchmen have undergone much: but throughout the whole territory of France, throughout the range of all her new dominions, not a single man of abilities has been neglected. Remember this, ye who triumph in our excesses. Ye who dread our example, speak plainly; is not this among the examples ye are the least inclined to follow?... Call my staff, and a file of soldiers.

"Gentlemen, he who lies under the pyramid,

Napoleon moved on, surrounded by what guards were left to him, thinking more of Paris than of Moscow, more of the conscripts he could enroll than of the veterans he had left behind him.

seems to have possessed a vacant mind and full heart, qualities unfit for a spy. Indeed he was not one. He was the friend and companion of that Sydney Smith who did all the mischief at Toulon, when Hood and Elliot fled from the city, and who lately, you must well remember, broke some of our pipes before Acre... a ceremony which gave us to understand, without the formalities of diplomacy, that the Grand-Signor declined the honour of our company to take our coffee with him at Constantinople."

Then turning to the file of soldiers,

"A body lies under the Great Pyramid: go, bury it six feet deep. If there is any man among you capable of writing a good epitaph, and such as the brave owe to the brave, he shall have my authority to carve it with his knife upon the Great Pyramid, and his name may be brought back to me."

"Allow me the honour," said a lieutenant; "I fly to obey."

"Perhaps," replied the commander in chief, "it may not be amiss to know the character, the adventures, or at least the name"....

"No matter, no matter, my general."

"Take them, however," said Kleber, holding a copy, "and all try your wits."

"General," said Menou, smiling, "you never gave a command more certain to be executed... What a blockhead was that king, whoever he was, who built so enormous a monument for a wandering Englishman!"

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The name of Bonaparte (what no writer has remarked) seems to be derived from *Bon-reparte*, now called *San Gennasio di buon riposo*, a village under Samminiato, in which town the family resided afterwards. The name of *Bon-reparte* is preserved by Benedict of Peterborough in his *Life of Henry II of England*, wherein are described the halts of Philippe Auguste...*per Castellum Florentinum, et per Seint Denys de Bon-reparte*, &c.

Although I did my utmost in pursuing this tyrant to death, recommending and insisting on nothing less, yet I acknowledge that I am sorry he is dead. Seeing what I see, I would preserve him as the countryman preserves the larger ant, to consume the smaller, more numerous and more active in mischief.

Europe wants a fierce housedog to keep in check those impudent little thieves, who molest and plunder her in all directions, shouting and laughing at her slowness and imbecility.

# CONVERSATION XI.

## BONAPARTE

AND THE

## PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE.

# BONAPARTE

AND THE

# PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE.

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PRESIDENT.

SIRE, while the car of Victory is awhile suspended in its course, and mothers are embracing those pledges of affection, which a frightful Revolution hath spared to their maternity, happy France is devising, under the auspices of her immortal hero, new pangs and afflictions for the tyrants of the ocean. The radiant star that shone upon your Majesty's nativity, throws a lustre that eclipses the polar. It embellishes our soil, and renders it fruitful in all those resources of industry, which will for ever keep it independent of distant and less happy climates. The beet-root, indigenous plant, satisfied all the wishes of a nation at once the most elegant and luxurious. *Frenchmen, I am contented with you,* said her tutelary Genius:

yes, your Majesty said it. Suddenly a thousand voices cry, *Let us make fresh sacrifices: we have wished; it is not enough; we will do more.*

Ardent to fulfill their duties, and waiting but to be instructed how, the brave youth, and those whose grey hairs are so honorable, implore that paternal wisdom which never will cease to watch over them, that they may receive those august commands which will accomplish their destinies.

The enemy no longer pollutes our soil: France recovers her attitude. Your Majesty wishes no new provinces: greater triumphs, wider dominion, to the successor of Charlemagne and of Trajan! That mighty mind, to bless a beloved and grateful people, shall make the animal kingdom confederate with the vegetable. Such are his conquests: the only ones that remain for him to atchieve.

From the calm of their retreats the sages of France step forth! and behold the decree which your Majesty had already uttered at the bottom of their hearts.

## DECREE.

To put our implacable enemies to confusion, to drive proud Albion to despair, to abolish the feudal system, to wither for ever the iron arm of despotism, and to produce, or rather to place

within the reach of all your Majesty's subjects, those luxuries which a long war, excited by the cupidity of the monopolizing islanders, seemed to have interdicted to our policy, and which our discretion taught us manfully to resign, it is proposed that every regiment in the French service be subjected to a mild and beneficent diabetes. Our chemists and physicians, ever labouring for the public good, have discovered that this disposition of the body, which if improperly managed might become a disease, is attended with the most useful results, and produces a large quantity of the saccharine matter.

The process was pointed out by Nature herself, who also did more, in the person of your Majesty, and of several of the Grand Dignitaries of the Empire, when the barbarians of the North flew from their capital, which they reduced to ashes, and threw themselves in consternation on the Vistula, the Oder, and the Elbe, to the very shores of the Cimbrian Chersonese.

I therefore have the honour of submitting to your Majesty, that the sugar, the produce of this simple operation, be made subsidiary to that of the beet-root in the proportion of one-third; and that this lively and long-desired sugar, so salutary to man from its prior relationship with his constituent

principles, and so eager for its reunion, be the only sugar used in the French empire and among the good and faithful allies of your Majesty: and further, that after the expiration of fourteen years, every Power in amity with France may fabricate it within its own territory.

His Majesty the Emperor of the French, King of Italy, Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine, and Mediator of Switzerland, was graciously pleased to make the following reply.

Sir, president of my senate, I am content with you. My ministers of war and of the interior shall be charged to carry your proposition into effect.

# CONVERSATION XII.

## BISHOP BURNET

AND

## HUMPHREY HARDCASTLE.

# BISHOP BURNET

AND

# HUMPHREY HARDCASTLE.

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HARDCASTLE.

I AM curious, my lord Bishop, to know somewhat about the flight and escape of my namesake and great uncle Sir Humphrey Hardcastle, who was a free-spoken man, witty, choleric, and hospitable, and who cannot have been altogether an alien from the researches of your lordship into the history of the two late reigns.

BURNET.

Why, Mr. Hardcastle, I do well remember the story of that knight, albeit his manners and morals were such as did entertain me little in his favour. For he hunted and drank and fornicated, and (some do averr) swore, which however, mark me, I do not deliver from my own knowledge, nor from any written and grave document. I the more wonder at him, as he had lived among the

Roundheads, as they were contemptuously called, and the minister of his parish was Ezechiel Stedman, a puritan of no ill repute. Howbeit he was ensnared by his worldlymindedness, and fell into evil courses. The Lord, who permitted him a long while to wallow in this mire, caught him by the heel, so to say, as he was coming out, and threw him into great peril in another way. For although he had mended his life, and had espoused your great aunt Margaret Pouncey, whose mother was a Touchet, two staid women, yet did he truly in a boozing-bout, such as some country-gentlemen I could mention do hold after dinner, say of the Duke,

*James, a murrain on him, is a papist.*

Now among the others of his servants was one Will Taunton, a sallow shining-faced knave, sweaty with impudence. I do remember to have seen the said Taunton in the pillory, for some prominent part he had enacted under the doctor Titus Oates; and a countrywench, as I suppose her to have been from her apparel and speech, said unto me, plucking my sleeve, *Look, parson, Will's forehead is like a rank mushroom in a rainy morning; and yet, I warrant you, they shew it forsooth as the cleanest and honestest part about him.*

To continue: Will went straitway, and communicated the words of his master to Nicolas Shottery, the Duke's valet. Nick gave unto him a shilling, having first spatten thereon, as he, according to his superstition, said, for luck. The Duke ordered to be counted out unto him eight shillings more, together with a rosary, the which, as he was afraid of wearing it (for he had not lost all grace), he sold at Richmond for two groats. He was missed in the family, and his roguery was scented. On which, nothing was foolisher, improperer, or unreasonabler, than the desperate push and strain Charles made, put upon it by his brother James, to catch your uncle Hum Hardcastle. Hum had his eye upon him, slipped the noose, and was over into the Low-Countries.

Abraham Cowley, one of your Pindarique Lyrists, a great stickler for the measures of the first Charles, was posted after him. But he played the said Abraham a scurvy trick, seizing him by his fine flowing curls, on which he prided himself mightily, like another Absalom; cuffing him, and, some do say, kicking him in such dishonest wise as I care not to mention, to his, the said Abraham's, great incommodity and confusion. It is agreed on all hands that he handled him very roughly, sending him back to his master with a

flea in his ear, who gave him but cold comfort, and told him it would be an ill compliment to ask him to be seated.

"Phil White," added he, "may serve you, Cowley. You need not look back, man, nor spread your fingers like a figleaf on the place. Phil does not carry a bottle of peppered brine in his pocket: he is a clever, apposite, upright little prig: I have often had him under my eye close enough, and I promise he may safely be trusted on the blind side of you."

Then, after these aggravating and childish words, turning to the Duke, as Abraham was leaving the presence, he is reported to have said, I hope untruly...

"But, damn it, brother! the jest would have been highthened if we could have hanged the knave." Meaning not indeed his messenger, but the abovecited Hum Hardcastle. And on James shaking his head, sighing, and muttering his doubt of the King's sincerity, and his vexation at so bitter a disappointment,

"Oddsfish! Jim," said his Majesty, "the motion was Hum's own: I gave him no jog, upon my credit. His own choler did it, a rogue! and he would not have waited to be invested with the *order*, if I had pressed him ever so civilly. I will

oblige you another time in any thing, but we can hang only those we can get at."

It would appear that there was a sore and rankling grudge between them, of long standing, and that there had been divers flings and flouts backwards and forwards, on this side the water, on the score of their mistress Poesy, whose favours to them both, if a man may judge from the upshot, left no such a mighty matter for heartburnings and ill blood.

This reception had such a stress and stir upon the bile and spirits of doctor Spratt's friend (for such he was, even while writing about his mistresses), that he wooed his Pegasus another way, and rid gentlier. It fairly untuned him for Chloes and fantastical things of all sorts, set him upon anotherguess scent, gave him ever afterwards a soberer and staider demeanour, and turned his mind to contentment.

HARDCASTLE.

The pleasure I have taken in the narration of your Lordship is for the greater part independent of what concerns my family. I never knew that my uncle was a poet, and could hardly have imagined that he approached near enough to Mr. Cowley for jealousy or competition.

BURNET.

Indeed they who discoursed on such matters were of the same opinion, excepting some few, who see nothing before them and every thing behind. These declared that Hum would overtop Abraham, if he could only drink rather less, think rather more, and feel rather rightlier: that he had great spunk and spirit, and that not a fan was left upon a lap when any one sang his airs. Poets, like ministers of state, have their parties, and it is difficult to get at truth, upon questions not capable of demonstration nor founded on matter of fact. To take any trouble about them is an unwise thing: it is like mounting a wall covered with broken glass: you cut your fingers before you reach the top, and you only discover at last that it is, within a span or two, of equal highth on both sides. Who would have imagined that the youth who was carried to his long home the other day, I mean my Lord Rochester's reputed child, Mr. George Nelly, was for several seasons a great poet? Yet I remember the time when he was so famous an one, that he ran after Mr. Milton up Snow-hill, as the old gentleman was leaning on his daughter's arm from the Poultry, and, treading down the heel of his shoe, called him a rogue and a liar, while another poet sprang out from a

grocer's shop, clapping his hands, and crying "*Bravely done! by Belzebub! the young cock spurs the blind buzzard gallantly!*" On some neighbour representing to Mr. George the respectable character of Mr. Milton, and the probability that at some future time he might be considered as among our geniuses, and such as would reflect a certain portion of credit on his ward, and asking him withal why he appeared to him a rogue and liar, he replied: "I have proofs known to few: I possess a sort of drama by him, entitled Comus, which was composed for the entertainment of Lord Pembroke, who held an appointment under the king, and this very John has since changed sides, and written in defence of the Commonwealth."

Mr. George began with satirizing his father's friends, and confounding the better part of them with all the hirelings and nuisances of the age, with all the scavengers of lust and all the link-boys of literature; with Newgate solicitors, the patrons of adulterers and forgers, who, in the long vacation, turn a penny by puffing a ballad, and are promised a shilling in silver, for their own benefit, on crying down a religious tract. He soon became reconciled to the latter, and they raised him upon their shoulders above the heads of the wittiest and the wisest. This served a

whole winter. Afterwards, whenever he wrote a bad poem, he supported his sinking fame by some signal act of profligacy, an elegy by a seduction, an heroic by an adultery, a tragedy by a divorse. On the remark of a learned man, that irregularity is no indication of genius, he began to lose ground rapidly, when on a sudden he cried out at the Haymarket, *there is no God.* It was then surmised more generally and more gravely that there was something in him, and he stood upon his legs almost to the last. *Say what you will,* once whispered a friend of mine, *there are things in him strong as poison, and original as sin.* Doubts however were entertained by some, on more mature reflection, whether he earned all his reputation by this witticism: for soon afterwards he declared at the Cockpit, that he had purchased a large assortment of cutlasses and pistols, and that, as he was practising the use of them from morning to night, it would be imprudent in persons who were without them, either to laugh or to boggle at the Dutch vocabulary with which he had enriched our language. In fact, he had invented new rhymes in profusion, by such words as *trackschuyt, Wageninghen, Skiermonikoog, Bergen-op-Zoom,* and whatever is appertaining to the marketplaces of fish, flesh, fowl, flowers, and

legumes, not to omitt the dockyards and barracks and ginshops, with various kinds of essences and drugs.

Now, Mr. Hardcastle, I would not censure this: the idea is novel, and does no harm: but why should a man push his neck into a halter to sustain a catch or glee?

Having had some concern in bringing his reputed father to a sense of penitence for his offences, I waited on the youth likewise, in a former illness, not without hope of leading him ultimately to a better way of thinking. I had hesitated too long: I found him far advanced in his convalescence. My arguments are not worth repeating. He replied thus.

"I change my mistresses as Tom Southern his shirt, from economy. I cannot afford to keep few; and I am determined not to be forgotten till I am vastly richer. But I assure you, doctor Burnet, for your comfort, that if you imagine I am led astray by lasciviousness, as you call it, and lust, you are quite as much mistaken as if you called a book of arithmetic a bawdy book. I calculate on every kiss I give, modest or immodest, on lip or paper. I ask myself one question only; what will it bring me?" On my marveling and raising up my hands, "You churchmen," he

added, with a laugh, "are too hot in all your quarters for the calm and steddy contemplation of this high mystery."

He spake thus loosely, Mr. Hardcastle, and I confess, I was disconcerted and took my leave of him. If I gave him any offence at all, it could only be when he said, *I should be sorry to die before I have written my life*, and I replied, *Rather say before you have mended it.*

"But, doctor," continued he, "the work I propose may bring me a hundred pounds." Whereunto I rejoined, "That which I, young gentleman, suggest in preference will be worth much more to you."

At last he is removed from among the living: let us hope the best; to wit, that the mercies which have begun with man's forgetfulness will be crowned with God's forgiveness.

HARDCASTLE.

I perceive, my lord bishop, that writers of perishable fame may leave behind them something worth collecting. Represented to us by historians like your lordship, we survey a light character as a film in agate, and a noxious one as a toad in marble.

BURNET.

How near together, Mr. Hardcastle, are things

which appear to us the most remote and opposite! how near is life to death, and vanity to glory! How deceived are we, if our expressions are any proofs of it, in what we might deem the very matters most subject to our senses! the haze above our heads we call the heavens, and the thinnest of the air the firmament.

# CONVERSATION XIII.

## PETER LEOPOLD

AND THE

## PRESIDENT DU PATY.

# PETER LEOPOLD

AND THE

# PRESIDENT DU PATY.

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AMONG the few Frenchmen who, within the last fifty years, have reflected much honour of any kind on their country, a distinguished rank is holden by the President Du Paty. His letters on Italy contain the most acute observations, and his interview with Leopold forms no inconsiderable portion of their interest. Pleased with the justness of his remarks and the pointedness of his expressions, and perhaps hoping to derive some advantage to the new Code from his deep study and long practise of jurisprudence, Leopold invited him to return the next day.

At the hour appointed, the Granduke was leaning with his elbow on the chimneypiece, that he might neither rise at the entrance of the President nor receive him in the manner of a sovran.

The commencement of all conversation is trifling, even among the greatest men: this expression, whenever I use it, means men of the greatest genius and worth. The usual courtesies, then, having been exchanged, Leopold thus addressed his illustrious visitant.

LEOPOLD.

I know, M. Du Paty, that your compliments, rich and abundant as they are, cannot stifle nor supersede your sincerity; and that if I seriously ask your opinion on the defects of my Code, you will answer me just as seriously.

The President bowed, and, observing that Leopold had paused, replied.

PRESIDENT.

Sir, I cannot bear in mind all the articles of your Code; and unless I could do so, my observations, if not erroneous, must be imperfect. On these subjects we may not talk vaguely and fancifully as on subjects of literature. Where man is to decide on man, where the happiness or wretchedness of one hangs on the lips of another, where a breath may extinguish a family or blight a generation, every thing should be tried particle by particle... To have abolished capital punishments is a proof, in certain circumstances, no less of wisdom than of humanity: but I would suggest to your con-

sideration, whether you have provided sufficiently for the protection of property and of honour. Your prisons are empty; but are you sure that the number of criminals is less? Or are you of opinion that it is better to see them at large than in custody?

LEOPOLD.

Here are few assassinations, and no highway robberies.

PRESIDENT.

I will explain the reason. In other countries the prostitutes are a distinct class: in Tuscany not. Where there are no jealousies there will be few assassinations. Supposing a case of tyranny, the Tuscans will wriggle under it rather than writhe; and if even they should writhe, yet they will never stand erect. They will committ no assassinations from the other motive to them, that is, for the purpose of robbing: and robbery on the highway they will not committ, having such facilities for committing safer and more compendious. Every man may plunder the vineyard of another at small hazard of prosecution; nor is there a single one in all Tuscany that is not plundered repeatedly every autumn, unless the owner pass his nights in it during the maturity of the grapes. If he prosecutes, he suffers a heavier punishment

than the prosecuted: he loses several days of labour, and receives no indemnity; nor indeed is there any security against a similar injury the succeeding year. Many robberies require impossible proofs. There are others the crime of which is extenuated by what ought to be an aggravation, because they are also breaches of trust. I know that your Highness has enacted clement laws in order to humanize the people, and that violence might never be added to rapine. But laws should be formed according to the character of the nation that is to receive them. The Italians were always more addicted to robbery and revenge than any other European people; crimes equally proceeding from idleness and effeminacy.

LEOPOLD.

On what authority do you found your assertion, M. Du Paty, that the Italians were always so addicted to theft?

PRESIDENT.

I will not urge as a proof of it the increasing severity of the ancient laws, which would only demonstrate their imperfection: but I will insist on the documents of the Latin writers *de re rusticâ*, who give particular directions on the breed of house-dogs for the safeguard of the farms, however far removed be the subject from cattle and cultivation.

Nothing similar has entered into the scheme of any modern author on agriculture. Added to which, there is hardly a Latin writer, whether in prose or poetry, whatever be his subject, who does not say something about thieves; so familiar was the idea. The word itself extended, in more than one direction, beyond the character it first designated: Plautus calls a soldier *latro*, Horace calls a servant *fur*. The Romans, who far excelled us in the greater part of their institutions, were much inferior in what by way of excellence we call the *police*. Hence, in early times, an opening to theft, among a people less influenced than any other by continence and honour. In many whole provinces of England, France, and Holland, and throughout all the kingdoms of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, the countryman may sleep in perfect security with his doors wide open: in Italy, not a single village, not a single house from Como to Reggio. The windows of every dwelling, in Florence, even of your own palace, are barricadoed by grates of iron; in other words, every dwelling, your own among the rest, holds forth in the censor's face a libel against the government. The fault is partly in the laws, and partly in the magistrature; for there is no nation so easily coerced by fear, as this. I recommend not cruelty. Those laws are cruel which are illusory, dilatory, or costly, to

such as appeal to their protection; not those which award a stated and known severity of punishment for proven offences. The latter are no more so than a precipice or a penknife: I may leap down the one, I may cut my throat with the other; I may do neither. I pay taxes for the security of my person, my property, and my character: every farthing I pay beyond for law, if I can demonstrate the equity of my cause, is an injustice. Sistus Quintus is the only sovran who appears to have acted uniformly according to the national character. Happy would it have been for his country, had he united to omniscience another attribute of the Godhead, immortality.

LEOPOLD.

In that case, M. Du Paty, I should not have had the pleasure of your conversation here. I see however that cruel laws do not necessarily make a people cruel. The Romans (I would rather call them the inhabitants of Rome) were less so under Sistus Quintus than before or since; and your neighbours the English are, and have always been, the most humane of men, under penal laws the most iniquitous and atrocious.

PRESIDENT.

The laws of England have been the subject of eulogy to many learned and sagacious men. I have read them repeatedly and pondered them

attentively. I find them often dilatory, often uncertain, often contradictory, often cruel, often ruinous. Whenever they find a man down they keep him so, and the more pertinaciously the more earnestly he appeals to them. Like tilers, in mending one hole, they always make another. There is no country in which they move with such velocity where life is at stake, or, where property is to be defended, so slowly. I have hardly the courage to state these facts, and want it totally to hazard a reflection on them. Can we wonder that, upon a Bench under so rotten an effigy of Justice, sate a Scrogges, a Jefferies, a Finch, a Page!

Some of the English laws are most strange, and equally strange are the expressions. I may be punished *for bringing a man into contempt:* as if any one could be brought into it without stirring a step on his own legs towards it. Aristides may have been laughed at, Phocion may have been reviled; but the judge who should have said that either had been brought into contempt, would have been covered with it himself by every citizen of Athens. The English are somewhat less quick in the apprehension of absurdity. This expression is not merely an absurdity, but a most pernicious one. The doctrine was inculcated by M. Murray,

a Scotchman by birth, but an English judge, and the opinion of judges in that country, when once acted upon, passes into law. The national character, if I am not greatly mistaken, will within half a century feel the sad effect of this decision. Nothing in the world is such a safeguard of liberty and of virtue, as the maxim '*Ne quid falsi dicere audeat, ne qui dveri non audeat,*' or such a loss and misfortune as its abolition. I would punish most severely every thing false against character, and permitt every thing true, as being the fairest chastisement of faults and follies, the mildest and surest and most expeditious. On the contrary, an English judge would punish in a fellow-citizen what he applauds in a Roman historian.

It may indeed be doubted whether the laws of England have not been gradually deteriorating for above seven hundred years; that is, whether they have not been accumulating more anomalies, more uncertainties, more delays, more costs, more contradictions, more cruelties.

LEOPOLD.

In England a peasant is slaughtered for the slaughter of another's sheep against his consent: a servant for stealing his master's spoon or wig: a little vagabond, starving at christmas, snatches a rag from a hedge, and is recommended to the

hangman for correction... Are these laws better than mine?

PRESIDENT.

No, sir; they are worse in themselves; yet your Highness would do well to make the exchange, throwing back to the English, the boy, rag, spoon, and wig. They would suit your people better, and might fairly be laid aside when it had out grown them: but I suspect they would be serviceable many years. Punish all crimes and you will punish few, remitt a single one and you create a thousand. I must here observe to you that the privilege of pardon in a prince, is the most flagrant of usurpations. It belongs for the greater part to the person injured; but not entirely: the magistrate, who takes cognizance of the particulars, should also give his assent in the name of the community, but not in consequence of any private petition or any subsequent representation. I perceive with pleasure in your Code that fines occurr but seldom.

LEOPOLD.

Pray, M. Du Paty, give me your reasons. If they are the same as mine they strengthen them; if they are different, they are more.

PRESIDENT.

Fines and halters, the minions of English jurists,

are the most summary and the least summary of chastisements, and by far the worst. A great fine does no harm whatever to a man of great fortune: it is a bribe to the laws, and ought as much to be prohibited as a bribe to the judge. It ruins, not the poorer man, but the poorer man's children: it deprives him of what he perhaps may do without, but what they cannot, without an injury to society. If his education was defective, which the offence goes a great way towards proving, theirs must be more defective still, because the means of educating them are taken away or lessened. In some countries heavier fines are imposed for injuries or affronts committed against the superiors of the offender, slighter for those against the inferiors: this, if indeed they are ever equitable in such cases, ought to be reversed: for the inferior is the weaker in calumny and injustice, as in other things. We cannot strike so hard from below as from above. The rich and powerful man does not lose even so much as a salute by it, while the artisan or tradesman loses in one instance a customer, in another ten or twenty, in another his livelihood.

LEOPOLD.

In reply to the former of your remarks, I know not what else to say than that all punishments must in some degree touch the innocent; and that

the family of every criminal is a loser in estimation, and consequently in property and prosperity, by his punishment, however just.

PRESIDENT.

The first duty of a legislator is to proportion penalties; the second is to isolate them as much as possible, and to embank the waters of bitterness. I would therefore, both for the sake of compensation to the unoffending and to guard against offences, place the children of criminals in schools or workhouses, appointed for that purpose, and forbid them to keep the paternal name, which, for more than one reason, should be the first thing forfeited. A workhouse should contain a school, not of writing or reading, but of industry. If you wish to make the bulk of men wiser, do not put books into their hands, which they will either throw away from indifference, or must drop from necessity, but give them employment suitable to their abilities, and let them be occupied in what will repay them the most certainly and the best. Their thoughts will thus be directed to one main point, and you will produce good artisans and good citizens: this is the wisdom for every day in the week; and what is higher than this will never be impeded by it, and will often rise out of it.

LEOPOLD.

I will consider your advice: I say it as legislator, not as prince: for in our language, you know, when we promise to consider we purpose to neglect. Here I may venture to say, that suitable to my character, my laws are wary and circumspect.

PRESIDENT.

I am afraid that, in the practise of jurisprudence, circumspection more than rarely means dilatoriness. Delay of justice is injustice. When offences are defined and punishments are apportioned, no circumspection is necessary. According to the practise in Tuscany, if I complain of a robbery, a young commissary of police examines me, and writes my deposition, without reading it over to me that I may acknowledge or challenge its correctness. After several weeks another young commissary examines me again; at the same interval a third; and if my relation varies a tittle from what is found written by either, no chance remains of recovering the loss or of punishing the offender. These young men are paid no better than postilions, and it seldom happens that one of the three is not corrupted by the offender. Travellers cannot delay their journey: their valets know it:

hence hardly one in twenty but finds himself robbed in this city. Witnesses are required where witnesses cannot be expected: for which reason treachery is the constant companion of violence, and all manliness of character is excluded. It is remarkable, that in a single week two cases have occurred in point. A young man in the theatre applauded an actress: one sitting near him called him a blockhead for his admiration. He replied. The severer critic, to prove his superior judgement, made a different use of his hands, applying them to the face and frill of the applauder, who stood motionless as the prompter himself, and on the following day applied to the police. It being proved that he returned no blow, the Aristarchus was condemned to a month's imprisonment. A few days before or afterwards (I forget which) a young forener, a painter by profession, who had refused a favour to another, was waylaid by him in the street at dusk, and a blow was aimed at his head from behind with a club, which, if he had not at the moment heard the feet of his assassin, must have killed him, as it required from its massiveness the use of both hands, and the assassin was a remarkably strong man. The forener turned and avoided it, immediately aiming a blow at his adversary. The facts were proved: and this blow,

necessary for self-preservation, was alleged as the reason why the crime was punished by one day's confinement. Yet this offender, it cannot be doubted, had premeditated an assassination, and had carried it as far into effect as he could. For this attempt he was almost unpunished; and if he had succeeded in it he would not have been punished at all; for the witnesses were brought together only by the contest. Had there been no contest there would have been no witnesses: it being the *etiquette* here in Tuscany not to interfere in another man's affairs without strong solicitation. Now the dead can neither ask favours, nor, what is equally necessary, requite them. Cowardice then is a merit, courage a bar to justice. What can be expected from a people, the least confident of all in personal strength and honour, and according to some the most insincere and fraudulent, when such dispositions are countenanced by such institutions?

LEOPOLD.

I need not remark, M. Du Paty, that institutions are with difficulty laid aside.

PRESIDENT.

Yet your Highness has abolished a very ancient one, that of monachism, I forbear to say totally, but surely almost so, and that without detriment

or danger. Now the forest is thinned, we discover its boundaries and can make our way through.

LEOPOLD.

The business is done then to your satisfaction.

PRESIDENT.

Not altogether so. In my journey from Pisa to Florence, I inquired what was allotted to each ejected monk, and was informed that it amounted to somewhat less than what each galleyslave could earn in prison; facilities and materials of which earning are supplied to him by government, but are supplied in no measure to the ejected monk.

LEOPOLD.

The fellows are idlers* and rogues: none of

* There is less agreement on the character of reformers than of others, and Peter Leopold was a reformer. It is reasonable to suppose that he should have defended his conduct in some such manner as is represented in this dialogue. His enemies accuse him of avarice; and support their opinion by insisting on the inadequate education and slender maintenance of his natural children. Irony may say of Leopold, what Flattery said of Cosmo III, that he was *pater pauperum*. The hospitals however were abundantly supplied and carefully attended. After his decease, the lands belonging to them have been granted on perpetual leases, their income much diminished, and their superintendence much neglected. At Pisa the poorest and most afflicted are so reluctant to enter the hospital, that the number of patients is reduced to *half* of what it was in the time of Leopold, and the quantity of accommodations and of comforts to less. At Florence the public

them understand and few of them believe what they teach. I am not more imperious and arbi-

is *permitted* to send subsidies of food twice in the week, and instances have occurred of patients who have suffered severely by the sudden effect of a nutricious meal.

The less contemptible of princes love money for the sake of power, the more contemptible love power for the sake of money. Avarice is condemned in them from a sentiment of avarice. Other faults injurious in a greater degree to the public morality are overlooked or forgiven. The principal one of Peter Leopold was his employment of spies and informers. Curiosity and lust were the motives; not cruelty nor suspicion. He and Lord Cowper divided all the beauty of Tuscany in such a manner as that neither should be jealous. In every family throughout Florence, high or low, one of the domestics or one of the children communicated to the agents of the Granduke a detail of its most minute affairs. No harm perhaps was perceived by them in these communications which never led to punishment and seldom to inconvenience; but in fact they did greater mischief to the national character than the best institutions could remedy or compensate. Hence venality, bad-faith, suspicion, cowardice; hence the prostration of private and the extinction of social virtue. Chetani, a thief-taker, a man equally of scandalous life and of coarse manners, walked into all the societies of Florence unmolested: age lost its dignity, youth its vivacity in his presence: all bowed before the grand informer. This creature has formed the manners of two generations and perhaps the national character for centuries to come. Leopold was in such security by his means, that on his departure from Tuscany, he left behind him not a soldier in Florence. He saw growing up a generation of Pygmies; and he saw them surrounded by cranes, with clipt wings and broken beaks.

As we frequently see in the progeny of spotted animals, that some are all-white, others all-black, so appears it in the family of Leopold, that one has inherited all the brighter parts,

trary with the monks, than the monks have been with princes. I have removed their cells, they have removed our palaces. The church of Saint Isidore in Seville was opposite the royal palace.

the others all the darker of his character. In removing my hand from the portraiture, I wish I could dismiss the most excellent prince of his age, with merely a charge of unwise curiosity, of unworthy suspicion, or of too vague an indulgence in sensuality. I wish he had always observed in himself the justice he inforced in others. The Counts del Benino for services rendered to Florence inherited certain valuable privileges: Leopold annulled them. Del Benino petitioned that he might appeal to the courts of justice. Leopold frankly and willingly assented. The judges fancied they should flatter him by displaying in their decision a luminous proof of his equity, and gave a sentence in favour of the plaintiff. Leopold disregarded it, and refused Del Benino any satisfaction for his loss.

I shall not be accused of flattery in recording some wise remarks and good actions of the reigning Granduke; for I am the only Englishman at Florence, I believe, who never goes to court, leaving it to my hatter, who is a very honest man, and to my breechesmaker, who never failed to fit me.

When the minister of Austria, and another, laid before him a list of freemasons, *carbonari*, and various subjects for imprisonment or exile, he replied that he knew his people better than strangers could do, and would answer for their conduct.

When some bigot told him that the Florentines ate meat on Fridays, he answered, " I am happy they have it to eat."

When a Pisan professor, a Signor Rossini, who had written sonnets and such other things as the Italians write on every novelty, deaths, marriages, births, arrivals, departures, ribbons, crosses, popes, pandars, catchpoles, academicians, &c. &c. &c. every thing in short from which money or meat may be extracted, and had complimented all the invaders and oc-

Sanchia, the king's daughter, was praying at a window which faced the shrine of the saint, when he appeared to the family, and commanded that the situation of the palace should be changed, as it was dangerous to have a woman so near his ashes*. The body is dangerous from a shew of enthusiasm, of all pests upon earth the most contagious. Those who believe nothing make others believe most; as the best actors on our theatres are those who retain the most perfect command over their feelings, voice, and countenance. Our spiritual Mamelukery is as ambitious of power and riches as if it had children to inherit them, and the money that falls into their hands lies dead, the land indifferently cultivated. I shall fumigate my old hives, one after another, not minding the buz from within.

I shall next abolish the greater part of the festivals, for every saint in the calendar has made ten thousand beggars and ten thousand thieves, not counting monks. Frequently, when I have been vehement against abuses, but silent on my

cupants of his country by turns, not without gross invectives against Ferdinand, congratulated him on his happy and glorious return, he ordered a timepiece to be given him, as the present most proper to a timeserver.

* Luca Tudensis Hist. Mirac. Sti Isidori, c. xxxv. Bollandus.

intentions, the clergy has told me that abuses form no part of their religion: they now tremble at what they call innovation, not knowing or dissembling that, in a pure religion, there can be no other innovations than abuses. They talk to me about the religion of our forefathers, conveyed to us in all its purity from the earliest ages. I am afraid, M. Du Paty, the pear was thumbed at the stalk when it was just ripe, and it rotted almost the next day.

PRESIDENT.

The priesthood in all religions sings the same anthem. First, the abuses are stoutly defended; but when the ground is no longer tenable, then these abuses form no part of the holy faith. If however they are always found in its company, you may as well say that the cat's skin is not the cat: the creature will make horrible cries if you attempt to strip it off, and perhaps will die of the operation.

You have done much towards the destruction of a system, where fraud has been incessantly building upon fraud for fifteen hundred years. The most dexterous attack ever made against the worship of the Virgin, the principal worship among catholics, which opens so many sidechapels to pilfering and imposture, is that of Cervantes.

LEOPOLD.

I do not remember in what part.

PRESIDENT.

Throughout Don Quixote. Dulcinea was the peerless, the immaculate, and death was denounced against all, who hesitated to admitt the assertion of her perfections. Surely your Highness never could have imagined, that Cervantes was such a Knight-errant as to attack Knight-errantry, a folly that had ceased more than a century, if indeed it was any folly at all; and the idea that he ridiculed the poems and romances founded on it, is not less improbable, for they contained all the literature of the nation, excepting the garniture of chapterhouses, theology, and pervaded, as with a thread of gold, the beautiful histories of this illustrious people. He delighted the idlers of romance by the jokes he scattered amongst them on the false taste of his predecessors and of his rivals; and he delighted his own heart by this solitary archery; well knowing what amusement those who came another day, would find in picking up his arrows and discovering the bull's-eye hits. Charles V was the knight of La Mancha, devoting his labours and vigils, his wars and treaties, to the chimerical idea of making all minds, like watches, turn their indexes, by a simultaneous

movement, to one point. Sancho Panza was the symbol of the people, possessing sound sense in all other matters, but ready to follow the most extravagant visionary in this, and combining implicit belief in it with the grossest sensuality. For, religion, when it is hot enough to produce enthusiasm, burns up and kills every seed entrusted to its bosom.

LEOPOLD.

Your exposition of the subject is quite novel to me, and your observation on it just. I care nothing about the worship of mapletrees and marble, or the inscriptions under them, or the coronets above: but I am resolved if not to forbid at least to discountenance the canonization of more saints in Tuscany. Many noble families have been ruined by counting a saint amongst them; almost as many as have been enriched by counting a pope. The process costs fifty thousand crowns. When it happens that a poorer man or woman is made the object of adoration, then indeed it is attended with somewhat lighter expense, because the confraternity that solicits it never does so, unless it has some powerful patron at Rome, nor unless the speculation is sure enough to be lucrative.

PRESIDENT.

It appears to me, sir, that even in a religion resting on peculation and fattening on vice, with violence on the right hand and falsehood on the left, giving every thing to the slothful and taking every thing from the industrious, no evil is worse than the necessity of periodical confession to priests: an evil which, I am afraid, all your power cannot remove nor all your wisdom remedy. It does more than impoverish noble families: it divests them of their respectability. What young woman who has once overcome her sense of shame, so as to expose before a stranger of another sex the first secrets of the heart, and the disclosing germs of the passions, can retain any delicacy of character? Modesty, by lifting up her veil, is changed in all her features; and when she turns her first step aside, is gone for ever.

Compare the women of Saxony and England with those of Italy and, I say it very reluctantly, of France. What a difference! In Florence indeed you rarely see an Englishwoman of character: they are chiefly those who are little respected at home; arrogant, presumptuous, suspicious, credulous, and speaking one of another more maliciously than untruly. But English-

women in their character as in their cloaths contract a great deal of dirt by travelling. Of this there are many causes: such as the filthiness of our continental inns, so shocking to decency, and to nothing of which kind are they accustomed in their own country; the immodest language they hear from all classes, and nearly from all individuals, a thing utterly unknown amongst them at home; the conversations on topics to which not even the most vulgar wretch in England ever alludes in presence of a female; and above all, their intercourse with others of their countrywomen who, from a long residence abroad, have been deeply initiated in foren manners. These lead the fashion: these teach them to talk aloud in their chapels, where they have any, and to feed greedily on the blushes of the more innocent, who at first enter decorously and piously, but who soon do the same towards others, that they may not be thought awkward and ill-bred.

Your Highness is perhaps acquainted with what occurred this morning. The young woman I understand was among the beauties of a little fishing-town in the west of England: an ensign fell in love with her, and married her. She soon observed that it was unfashionable in Italy to live without her *cavaliere servente*: she engaged one:

he went away: she took another. In these matters the number two multiplies rapidly: they followed not singly nor by intervals, but one upon another, like eels down a floodgate after a shower. Having found access to the house of the Minister, she was visited by many, however they declaimed against her, until at last a gallant for some private injury has whipt her twice in the streets this very day. It is hoped she will have interest enough to stop enquiry, and will have received no other harm than a few such circuitous lines as designate the latitudes on a globe, and the name, partly derived from her native place, and partly from her recent misfortune, of *La Nereide Frustata*... the whipt Nereid. Nicknames and whippings, when they are once laid on, no one has discovered how to take off.

LEOPOLD.

What the English ladies may be in their interior I do not pretend to know: but when I compare their manners and address with those of my Florentines, or indeed with those of any other nation, it is far beyond my prerogative to grant them the precedency. Ours are accused of levity at church: they go thither, it is objected, to make love. Be it so. I never saw a Florentine girl or woman, who did not come out in better humour

than she entered, nor an English who did not come out in worse. The heart may surely be as impure from gall as from love; and if we must err on either side, let it rather be towards the kind affections than towards the unkind. The Florentine opens her heart, gives it, and resumes it, as easily as her fan: the Englishwoman abroad keeps hers locked up, as a store-room for the reputations she has torne, or intends to tear, in pieces. She may be indeed a good mother; but if she takes alarm or umbrage at every foot that approaches her, I would rather have such a good mother in cub or kennel, than in my closet, or at my table.

PRESIDENT.

The Englishwoman is domestic: she of highest rank superintends the village-school, hears the children their lesson, examines their cleanliness, observes their dress, enquires into their health, remarks their conduct, presages their propensities, is amused at their games and is interested in their adventures. She visits the sick, she converses with the aged, she comforts the afflicted, and she carries her sons and daughters with her, to acquire the practise of their duties. Those in England are all diffidence; those in Italy all defiance. Awkward beyond all other women upon earth,

they happily are the most so when they are copying what is bad.

If we desire to know with certainty what religion is best, let us examine in what country are the best fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, wives: we shall there also find the best citizens, and of course the best christians.

LEOPOLD.

Popery, with all her abuses, hath had her converts, and even from among the reformed, and men neither vicious nor ignorant: explain me this.

PRESIDENT.

Reasons and reason are different things. In all religions there have been believers who reflected with equal intensity. Those you mention, serious and melancholy triflers, attach much importance to things of little. After attempting to penetrate and pass the crowd of fathers (as they are called) and saints and martyrs, and knowing that before them lies a vast extent of perplexity and confusion, they stop, exhausted and spiritless, cast back a look of anguish over the ground they have plodded through, hesitate, close their eyes, and sink upon the bosom of infallibility. As if the Almighty had ever invested with his attributes a senseless and vicious priest, studious of nothing

but the usurpation of power and the aggrandisement of family, a creature stained, as the greater part hath been, with murder and incest and other enormities, at which Nature is confounded and Piety in consternation.

LEOPOLD.

The best among them permitt for money what they and all their statutes condemn. Prohibitions are merely a preparation for indulgences: sins are wealth, masses save souls, virtues are insufficient. Would not you relieve your father from the agonies of hell, when a petticoat tied by you round a priest's mistress can accomplish it? do you hesitate? would not you, unnatural wretch! desire that your children should perform the same service for you? I have under my windows here in Florence, no fewer than three uncles married to their nieces by express permission from the *Holiness of our Lord* ... the title always given to him in our gazettes. A little more wealth, with hardly any more impudence, and we (unless I check it) may see brother and sister, father and child, united by the sacrament of matrimony.

PRESIDENT.

Let me return to my monks, who, whatever may be the abuses of their institutions, have nothing to do with such abominations.

LEOPOLD.

While they are monks, no: but scatter the dragon's teeth upon a warmer mould, and up springs a body of the same troopers.

Those of Rome were desirous, not many years ago, of beatifying one of your countrymen. *Such a rarity*, said Benedetto Sant-Anna, one of its promoters, *was the brilliant device of father Nepomuceno, and should have gloriously greased our platters.* Benedetto Sant-Anna Torbellini is the natural son of a prince whom I esteem. Neglecting his studies, he was placed in a monastery at Rome, where he was remarkable for his musical powers and his influence on the minds of his fair auditors. An intrigue with the adopted niece of a Cardinal, was his ruin. *It is not enough, Benedetto*, said his Eminence, *that you treat me with this ingratitude; me, who from your earliest youth have treated you with paternal kindness. We have known each other's foibles: but such an affront in my own library, under my own eyes, is unpardonable.*

In vain he protested that, guilty as he was, this aggravation of his guilt was unintentional; that for the universe he would not have wounded the feelings of his early friend and benefactor, who certainly had been towards him a great deal more

than ever father was; that his Eminence at no other time could have been irritated by any levity in him; that he thought the library a sanctuary unentered by human foot; and that he and Costanza had almost blinded themselves, by dusting the cushion where... *Begone from my sight, villain; leave Rome instantly,* cried the cardinal. He obeyed, bringing me a letter; on which, knowing his state of probation, I did not hesitate to place him at the head of my young fifers, and he will shortly be leader of my band. His account of the sanctification is this.

A poor devil had been observed every day, for twenty years, saying his prayers and beating his breast upon a bridge at Rome. It sounded like a drum from inanition voluntary or involuntary. During the performance of these religious duties a boy, who had gone over upon the butress on such an occasion as is usual here in Italy on those places, fell from it, and was taken up by a barge a little way off. We have receits for doing every thing, miracles not excepted. On the death of the Frenchman, who was attended in his last moments by father Nepomuceno, it was resolved to make a saint of him, as having saved by his intercession the boy who tumbled from the butress. Depositions were made upon oath that he was seen pray-

ing at the time, and that he neither called out for assistence nor exerted any other human aid. Such unequivocal proofs of piety and faith interested all the holy city in his behalf. His cloaths, after being well shaken on the bridge and sprinkled with holy water, were removed to the convent. Benedetto Sant-Anna had the charge of giving them the odour of sanctity, by sprinkling them daily with the powder of a Tonquin bean, a substance then unknown at the capital of the christian world. They were kissed inside and outside, and some of the more pious in this operation licked them furtively.

You must have observed at Rome, M. President, a vast number of lame beggars. No single war, in ancient or modern times, could have lamed so many as now become lame every year. Nearly all are cheats. A consultation was holden by the elder monks; and it was resolved to collect these rogues and vagabonds, and to restore the use of their limbs in the church of the monastery. Two younger members of the confraternity were commissioned to joke with some and to pay a paolo to others. At the morning appointed for the solemnity, the cloisters were filled with these creatures upon crutches, and the church, arrayed in silks of yellow and red, was admirably well

attended. Every one was in full dress: the ladies with naked bosoms, the gentlemen with swords. Suddenly the cloister-door flew open, and a tremendous sound was heard from the pavement to the roof. Tatters rustled round, crutches and knees and bosoms covered with parchment made a noise greater than that of an attack with bayonets. Waves of mendicants, one bending over another, poured in. It was an edifying sight.

An old beggar, really lame, and not in the secret, heard by chance of the ceremony, and hopped in after the rest. Many prayers were offered up to the beggar-saint: the censer was waved frequently before his picture; motions of the hands in various figures were made over the supplicants, and all received signal benefit. Some walked like boys, others walked indeed, but felt pain. Again crosses were made, again breasts were beaten, groans and thanksgivings were mingled, till at last pain and stiffness were unfelt by all; old sinews were knitted anew, lost bones recovered, and even the maimed and mangled left their late supports in the nave of the church as incumbrances, and perhaps as offerings, and walked firm and erect to finish their thanks in the refectory. One only remained. Father Nepomuceno who led the rear, approached him marveling, and said

majestically and somewhat angrily, *Arise.* The beggar, strengthened in faith, made an effort.

*Do not you find yourself better?* said father Nepomuceno.

*Rather better*, replied the mendicant.

*Rise then instantly.*

He raised himself vehemently, and his crutches and knees and knuckles rattled all in unison upon the floor.

*Thou man of little faith! away!* exclaimed father Nepomuceno. He led him into his cell, and cried furiously, *What means this?*

*God knows*, replied the poor good patient creature; *it is God's will.*

*Have you prayed?* asked the father hastily.

*Thrice aday regularly, since I could speak.*

*In church? and always to the Virgin?*

*Yes*, replied the penitentiary.

*Have you confessed?*

*Yes.*

*Have you scourged yourself for your manifold sins?*

*Alas! how can I scourge myself!* cried the beggar with tears in his eyes, from so painful an inability ... *I can only beat myself when I lie down: and besides, I can committ no offence to any one, which God forbid I should ever wish to do.*

*No offence to any one! is that no offence? How! no offence do you think it to talk thus presumptuously? We are all sinners: unless we did works of charity and penitence, what, in the name of heaven, would become of us! Vile wretch! I must open your eyes; you have secret crimes unexpiated: you have brought dishonour upon him who would have been your patron, and whose manifold mercies you have just witnessed towards the more deserving.*

Upon this he took down a scourge, and bade the beggar kiss it. The contrite man complied. The father unconsciously drew it through his left hand, and found that it was one adapted to his own shoulders. He threw it down indignantly, and seized an old cord from across the back of a chair, with which, and without any farther ceremonials, he scourged the lame beggar heartily, exhorted him to faith, humility, and penitence, and dismissed him weeping and praising God that his eyes were opened*.

* Saints are again the *rage*, but saints of *bon ton*. It will hardly be credited that the following is an extract from a Gazette. Firenze, giovedi 19 Decembre 1822. La religione de' *Servi di Maria* (her servants are very familiar with her) che ha avuto origine in questa capitale, ci ha dato in quest' anno il contento di vedere due de' suoi figli, nostri Toscani, *sollevati all' onore degli altari*, cioè il B. Ubaldo Adimari,

PRESIDENT.

I am not the advocate of this order; but it contains, I know, many virtuous individuals; many have resigned all pretensions to patrimony in favour of brothers and sisters, relying on a secure possession of their hoods and cells. I may not be greatly benefitted by their processions or their prayers, but surely as much by these as by the cutlass and pistol of the highwayman.

LEOPOLD.

I trust however, M. Du Paty, that the laws and establishments are better in Tuscany than in the other states of Italy.

nobile Fiorentino di cui ne furono già fatte le festi nella basilica della SS. Annunziata di questa città, ne' tre giorni della scorsa pasqua, cioè 7. 8. e 9 Aprile, e nella chiesa di monte Senario il di 16 nello scorso maggio, in cui ricorreva la solennita de Ascenzion del Signore, e il B. Bonaventura Bonaccorsi, nobile Pistojese, del quale oltre le solennissime feste celebrate in Orvieto, *dove passò alla gloria e si conserva il di lui sacro corpo,* ne' giorni 11. 12. e 13 dello scorso ottobre, il di 14 del corrente, giorno della sua *preziosa morte,* ne fù con decente sacra pompa solennizata la memoria nella predetta basilica della SS. Annunziata. *Rendiamo pertanto grazie all' Altissimo, per averci concesso in questi due Beati Comprensori due potenti avvocati al suo divin trono!* According then to the papists, God is ready enough to receive thanks and perfumery, from whoever offers, without the introduction of squire or chamberlain, but is somewhat slow to grant pardon without such powerful advocates as Signor Bonaventura Bonaccorsi or Signor Ubaldo Adimari, in their saintly embroidered shoes and pink satin robes of glory.

PRESIDENT.

I observed nearly the same inequality at Como. A house of industry was established there: virtuous mothers have been led frequently out of it, heavy with child, and died from inanition in the streets, their allowance of food being only one scanty meal in the twenty-four hours, while prostitutes, thieves, assassins, poisoners have enjoyed purer air and more comfortable accommodation in prison, and have been supplied twice in the day with more wholesome food, and each time more abundantly. In both instances a discouragement is holden forth to honesty, a premium to crime. Sovrans know more correctly the state of other countries than of their own. We may be too near great objects to discern them justly, and the greatest of all objects to a prince is the internal state of his people.

LEOPOLD.

Your observation is just. The persons we employ have more interest in deceiving us than others have. I can trust one, Gianni*. I send none

* At my last arrival on the continent, it retained among its ruins two great men, Kosciusko, and Gianni: the one I had seen in England, the other I visited in Genoa. He was in his ninetieth year; an age to which no other minister of king or prince or republic has attained. But the evil passions never preyed on the heart of Gianni: he enjoyed good health from good spirits, and those from their only genuine source, a

abroad; so that I am rather less liable to deception than my neighbours are. As the gentlemen

clear conscience. Accustomed, as I had been, to see chattering mountebanks leap one after another upon the same stage, play the same tricks they had exploded, first amid the applauses and afterwards amid the execration of the people, I was refreshed and comforted by the calmness and simplicity of this venerable old man. Occasionally he displayed a propensity to satire, not the broadfaced buffoonery, and washy loquacity of his nation, but the apposite and delicate wit which once sparkled in the better societies of Athens and of Paris. He has left behind him a history of his own times, which never will be published in ours. If any leading state of Europe had been governed by such a minister, how harmless would have been the French revolution *out* of France, how transitory *in*. Patient, provident, moderate, imperturbable, he knew on all occasions what kind and what intensity of resistance should be opposed to violence and tumult. I will adduce two instances. Ricci bishop of Pistoja and Prato, had excited the indignation of his diocesans, by an attempt, as is related in the Dialogue, to introduce the prayers in Italian, and to abolish some idle festivals and processions. The populace of Prato, headed by a Confraternity, broke forth into acts of rebellion; the bishop's palace was assaulted, his life threatened. The church-bells summoned all true believers to the banner: the broken bones of saints were exposed, and invited others to be broken. Leopold, on hearing it, shocked in his system of policy, forgot at the moment the mildness of his character, and ordered all the military at hand to march against the insurgents. Gianni was sent for: he entered the very instant this command was issued. *What disturbs your Highness?* said he mildly.

"You ought to have been informed, Gianni, answered the Gran-duke, that the populace of Prato has resisted my authority and insulted Ricci. My troops march in a body against these wretches." *I have already dispatched a stronger force against*

of Tuscany seldom travel further than to Sienna or to Pisa, the expense of a coffeehousekeeper, under the title of plenipotentiary, is saved me everywhere.

*them than your Highness has done, which by your permission must remain in the city.*

" On free-quarters until the madmen are quiet. But how could you collect a stronger force so instantaneously ?"

*Instead of two regiments I dispatched two crosses; instead of cannon and ammunition-waggons, a nail-box, a hammer, and a clean napkin. If reinforcements are wanted, we can find a dice-box at Riccardi's, and a spunge at Rospigliosi's, on good security. At this hour however, I am persuaded that the Confraternity is walking in procession and extolling to the skies not your humanity but your devotion.* It was so.

The *maximum* or *assize* had been abolished by Gianni: lands and provisions rose in value: the people was discontented, broke into his house, drank his wine, cut his beds in pieces, and carried off the rest of his furniture. Leopold, who had succeeded to the Empire of Germany and was residing at Vienna, decreed that the utmost severity should be exercised against all who had borne any part in this sedition. It was difficult to separate the more guilty from the less; particularly as every man, convicted of delinquency, might hope to extenuate his offence by accusing his enemy of one more flagrant. Gianni, who could neither disobey nor deferr the mandate of the Emperor, engaged Commendatore Pazzi to invite some hundreds of the people to a banquet in the court-yard of his palace.

Now while the other families of those Florentines, who in ages past had served this bustling little city, were neglected for their obscurity, shunned for their profligacy, or despised for their avarice and baseness, that of Riccardi was still in esteem for its splendid hospitality, that of Pazzi for its patronage of the people. The invitation was unsuspected: they met,

PRESIDENT.

Your Highness is as desirous of abolishing idle offices as others are of creating them*.

LEOPOLD.

I am not afraid of losing my place from a want of party friends, and have no very poor relations to support. Among the residents in Florence, I speak in confidence M. President, I remember none of even ordinary talents, or, according to what I could judge or could learn from report, of

they feasted, they drank profusely; every man brought forward his merits; what each had done, and what each was ready to do, was openly declared and carefully recorded. On the following morning, before day-break, forty were on the road to the gallies. The people is never in such danger, as from its idol.

* There is in Italy a little state governed by a woman, who constantly sends after the *opera* to the innkeepers of her city, and demands a portion of what has been spent amongst them within the day by strangers. If many carriages have stopped at their doors, in passing through the place, the same visit is made, the same tax imposed. She has forbidden the extraction of pictures, offering to purchase them at the value: she has taken several to herself, and has never paid for them. Is it not as proper for the Saints of the Holy Alliance to exercise the duties of high police in such instances, as against the public, where great nations, and such as were never subject to them, rise unanimously and demand the reform of government? England maintains a minister at the court of this woman, whose revenues are little more than his appointments, and whose political influence is weaker than that of any one who keeps a secondrate ginshop in St. Giles. What reed or rush, in its rottenest plight, but serves for the spawn of our aristocracy to stick on!

the slightest political or literary reputation. Not long ago a young person was sent hither in that capacity, who had more dogs than books, and more mistresses than ideas. He rode hard, drank hard, and fiddled hard, and admitted to his society, as such people usually do, the vilest and most abandoned of both sexes. At Milan, his course was arrested by a deficiency of means: he had already drawn on his bankers here for sums beyond such even as the prodigality of his government had enabled him to deposit in their hands. With this heavy debt upon him, he drew on them again from Milan, at one single time, for four thousand crowns: the draft was dishonoured, with a protestation that their concerns were inadequate to such frequent and vast demands. He replied with a vehemence of language such as most tribunals would have severely punished in a private character, and such as, if presented in complaint to me, would have obliged me to insist on his recall. When he thus retired to rest himself for about a year, after the labours of his office, he left behind him a pack of hounds, a groom, a chargè d'affaires, a chasseur, and several other domestics. The amusement of these delegated powers was cat-hunting in the spacious gardens belonging to the Legation. Every day the diversion was pursued, until

the neighbourhood was so infested with rats, that serious remonstrances, light as the subject may appear, were presented to me, by gardeners, grocers, oilmen, booksellers and stationers, and other trades, and I condemned to extermination by poison the more innocent of the offenders.

As it often happens that those who are very wealthy, are far from forward in displaying what they possess, so happens it that, in countries which abound in talents and genius, the governors are careless how little of them is exhibited in their appointments to foren courts. I should be happy to see, as ministers at mine, M. President, men like you, with whom I could converse familiarly and frankly on matters of high importance: and in my opinion no greater compliment could be paid me, by the princes my friends and allies. To delegate as their representatives young persons of no knowledge, no conduct, no respectability, proves to me a neglect of their duty and an indifference to their honour, and no less evidently shews the opinion they entertain of me to be unworthy and injurious. Trifling men, in such situations, may suit indeed small courts, but not where the sovran enjoys any considerable share of credit, for the rectitude of his views and the arduousness of his undertakings. This reflection

leads me back again to an enquiry into the last of your positions, that my code provides but faintly and ineffectually for the protection of character.

The states of Italy are the parts of shame in the body politic of Europe. I would not hold out an ægis to protect a snail: the gardener does not shelter his plants while they are underground. I declare to you, M. Du Paty, that whenever and wherever I find a character to protect, I will protect it.

PRESIDENT.

I am averse to the perpetual maintenance of great armies; but without somewhat of a military spirit there can be little spirit for anything, as we see in China and India. That the Florentines should have conquered the Pisans, quite astonishes me when I look upon them; at present they could not conquer a hencoop guarded by a cur.

LEOPOLD.

The Italians, when they were bravest, were like tame rabbits; very pugnacious amongst themselves, but crouching, screaming, and submitting to be torne piecemeal by the smallest creatures of another race. In the consulate of Marcus Valerius (brother of Publicola) and Postumius, the Sabines were conquered: thirteen thousand prisoners were taken in two battles, in the second no Roman was slain.

I want no armies: if ever I should want them, I can procure a much better commodity at the same price: the rations of a Bohemian and of a Tuscan are the same: I would not exchange a good farmer for a bad soldier. I want honest men, and no other glory than that of making them.

PRESIDENT.

In Tuscany there are persons of integrity; few indeed, and therefore the more estimable. One honest Italian is worth one hundred thousand honest Englishmen, for such I imagine to be the proportion. Wherever there is a substitute for morality, where ceremonies stand in the place of duties, where the confession of a fault before a priest is more meritorious than never to have committed it, where virtues and duties are vicarious, where crimes can be expiated after death for money, where by breaking a wafer you open the gates of heaven, probity and honour, if they exist at all, exist in the temperament of the individual. Hence a general indifference to virtue in others; hence the best men in Italy do not avoid the worst; hence the diverging rays of opinion can be brought to no focus; nothing can be consumed by it, nothing warmed.

The language proves the character of the

people. Of all pursuits and occupations, for I am unwilling to call it knowledge, the most trifling is denominated *virtù*.

The Romans, detained from war and activity by a calm, termed it *malacia*: the Italians, whom it keeps out of danger, call it *bonaccia**.

Love of their country is so feeble, that whatever is excellent they call *pelegrino*.

So corrupt are they, that softness with them must partake of disease and impurity: it is *morbidezza*.

Such is their idea of contemplation, and of the subjects on which it should be fixed, that if a dinner is given to a person of rank, the gazettes announce that it was presented *alla Contemplazione della sua Eccellenza*.

A lamb's fry is *cosa stupenda*.

Strength, which frightens, and finery, which attracts them, are *honesty*: hence *valentuomo* and

* On malacia and bonaccia let me remark that although the latter supplanted the former as *Beneventum* did *Maleventum*, yet *malacia* descends not in a direct line from malus (a thing evidently unknown to those who substituted in its place *bonaccia*,) but from μαλακός. *Malus* itself has the same origin. Effeminacy and wickedness were correlative terms both in Greek and Latin, as were courage and virtue. With us softness and folly, virtue and purity. Let others determine on which side lies the indication of the more quiet, delicate, and reflecting people.

*galantuomo.* A welldressed man is a man of honour, *uomo di garbo.*

Pride is offended at selling anything: the shopkeeper tells you that he gives you his yard of shoe-ribbon: *dà,* not *vende.*

Misfortune is criminal: the captive is a wicked man, *cattivo.*

*Meschino,* formerly *poor**, is now mischievous, *or bad.*

A person is not rendered vile by any misconduct or criminality: but if he has the toothache, he is *avvilito.*

*Opera* was among the Romans *labour,* as *operæ pretium,* &c. It now signifies the most contemptible of performances, the vilest office of the feet and tongue, whenever it stands alone *by excellence.*

*Ostia,* a sacrifice *(hostia)* now serves equally to designate the Almighty and the wafer that seals a billet-doux †.

* Teseo era stato anch' egli un certo protettore e difensore, e benignamente e con amorevolezza haveva ascoltato i preghi degli uomini *meschini.*—Vite di Plutarco da M. Ludovico Domenichi MDLX.

† The following distich on the eucharist, as it is called, does not appear to have been written by any of the Jesuits.

Oblita butyro quanta es mea crustula! quanta,
Vel sine butyro quum deus esse potes!

Your Highness will permit me to add one more example. If injustice is done and redress claimed, it is requisite to perform an execrable act, if the words mean anything, *umiliare una supplica.* Language so base and infamous was never heard in the palace of Domitian, who commanded that he should be called lord and God.

I could select many more such expressions. In this perversion of moral feeling, it is not to be expected that the laws can always stand upright. It is dangerous for a forener not to visit a commissary of police; but to omit in an address to him the title of Illustrissimo, is fatal. I conversed the other day with an English gentleman, who had conducted his wife and family to Pistoja, for the benefit of the air. He rented a villa at the recommendation of the proprietor, who assured him that the walls were dry; the only doubt he entertained. Within a few days it rained, and the bedchambers were covered with drops. His wife and child suffered in their health: he expostulated: he offered to pay a month's rent and to quit the premises, insisting on the nullity of an agreement

The comparison in this next between St. Martinus and Pætus, is more in their manner.

Major uter? tunicam, Martine, rogantibus offers;
Pæte, dares ultro quod tegitur tunicâ.

founded on fraud. The proposal was rejected: a court of judicature declared the contract void. The gentleman, to prove that there was nothing light or ungenerous in his motive, gave to his banker, M. Cassigoli, the amount of the six months' rent, to be distributed among respectable families in distress. The proprietor of the house, enraged at losing not only what he had demanded, but also what was offered, circulated a report in the coffeehouses and wherever he went, that the gentleman might well throw away his money, having acquired immense sums by piracy. He is, on the contrary, a literary man, of a life extremely retired. Such expressions could not fail to be injurious to a stranger, in any place whatever, and particularly in a town where perhaps until then no stranger had resided. He appealed to the tribunals, with a result far different from the former. The commissary, to whom the business was referred by them, called the offender to him in private, without informing the plaintiff of his intention. Hence no proof was adduced, no witness was present, and the gentleman knew nothing of the result for several weeks afterwards. It was, an admonition to be more cautious in future, given to a man, who had in succession been servant to two masters, both of whom were found dead with-

out illness; a man who, without any will in his favour, any success in the lottery, any dowry with his wife, any trade or profession, any employment or occupation, possessed twelve thousand crowns. Where justice is refused, neglected, or perverted, the *Presidente del buon Governo* is the magistrate who receives the appeal. The forener stated his case fully to the president, from whom he obtained no redress *.

* The following circumstances have just occurred. A girl in the service of an English family, warned to leave it, for the commonest if not the slightest of offences, walked away from the teatable to the other side of the room, equally distant from the door, and poured boiling water on a beautiful boy four years old. She expressed no concern whatever, nor even lifted the child from the ground on which he fell. The father ordered her to quit the apartment. She disobeyed: he pushed her out with some violence, and, as it appeared, not without a bruize on the face. She went directly to live, at a cheap rate, with a judge, who probably gave her directions how to act, instead of saying, as a more honest man would, "*You have done a greater mischief than you have received: I cannot countenance you in your prosecution.*" The man-servant who caused her dismissal, was called to declare that she had received some dozen blows on the breast: he swore so: it was proved by an Italian marquis and an English gentleman, who were present, that he was not in the room: neither he nor the girl was reproved for perjury and subornation to perjury; the one being a spy, the other living with a judge. The matter was then brought before three judges: they decided unanimously against her. It was again tried before three others: two were of the same opinion. The youngest, a friend of the girl, and of whose protection she boasted openly, gave his sentence in her favour. It was tried a third time, before three friends of the protecting judge; and they, as

LEOPOLD.

As I covered my ears at the commencement, I must at the conclusion. But ill and scandalously as my servants acted, the rank and character of the injured gentleman were imperfectly known to the commissary and the president, who also are ignorant that many of the best families in England are untitled. Here counts and marquisses are more

might be expected, reversed the former sentences, remarking that the gentleman might recover, from the hundred livres he was condemned by them to pay, as much as should, *after another legal process*, appear just and reasonable for the injury his family had sustained, his wife in thirtysix days of fever and convulsions from her fears, his child in a scald, on the head, neck, and shoulders, cured within a month. He was condemned to discharge all the costs of the prosecution, *because the girl could not*, and because her lawyer was a very young man and wanted encouragement.

The salary of a judge in Tuscany is that of a cook in England; the regard to character far lower: yet that the office is considered as more illustrious, is demonstrated by the fact, of the president *del buon governo*, having been promoted to this station from the former. The English gentleman did not offer to profit by this knowledge.

More injustice is committed in the name of the mild and virtuous Ferdinand than of the most ferocious and faithless prince in Christendom.

A courier who had been in the service of Prince Borghese, went openly by day into the Postmaster's office, stabbed him in the body, fired a pistol through his hand, was confined at Volterra, and released at the intercession of Prince Borghese *in six weeks*.

Whoever shall publish a periodical work, containing a correct and detailed account of irregularities and iniquities in the various courts of law throughout Europe, will accomplish

plentiful than sheep and swine, families have orders of knighthood who have not credit for a pound of polenta, and the bravest of whose members would tremble to mount a goat, in their worst breeches.

PRESIDENT.

Your predecessors have softened what was already too soft: and your Highness must give some consistency to your mud, by exposing and working it, if you desire to leave upon it any durable or just impression. I am afraid it will close upon your footstep the moment you go away.

LEOPOLD.

I hope not. Tuscany is a beautiful landscape with bad figures: I must introduce better. I must begin with what forms the moral character, however my conduct may be viewed by the catholic princes. Few amongst them are better than whipt children, or wiser than unwhipt ones. They are puppets in the hands of priests: they nod their heads, open their mouths, shut their eyes, and

the greatest of all literary undertakings, and will obtain the merit of the staunchest, the truest, and the best of all reformers. No subject is so humble that it may not be recommended by a fit simplicity of style; no story so flat that it may not solicit attention if edged by pointed remarks. The writer will perform one of those operations which are often so admired in Nature, by eliciting a steddy, broad, and beautiful *light, from rottenness* and corruption.

their blood is liquefied or congealed at the touch of these impostors. I must lessen their influence by lessening their number. To the intent of keeping up a numerous establishment of satellites in the church militant, a priest is punished more severely for performing twice in the day the most holy of his ceremonies, than for almost any violation of morality. But the popes perhaps have in secret a typical sense of the mass, permitting the priest to celebrate it only once, in remembrance that Christ was sold once only. When we arrive at mystery, a single step farther and we tumble into the foss of fraud. The Romish church is the general hospital of all old and incurable superstitions from the Ganges to the Po. It is useful to princes as a pigstie is to farmers, but it shall not infect my palace, and shall do as little mischief as possible to my people.

PRESIDENT.

Your Highness, by diminishing the number of priests, will encrease the rate of masses. A few days ago I went into San Lorenzo, and saw a clergyman strip off his gown before the altar with violence and indignation. Enquiring the reason, I was informed that four *pauls* had been offered to him for a mass, which he accepted, and that on his coming into the church, the negotiator said he

could afford to pay only three*. There are offices in the city where masses are bargained for publicly. Purgatory is the Peru of Catholicism: the body of Christ in some of our shops is at the price of a stockfish, in others a fat goose will hardly reach it, and in *Via de' Calzaioli* it is worth a sucking pig.

LEOPOLD.

The Roman states are sadly worse in proportion.

PRESIDENT.

There are more *religious* in that territory than

* The Italians were always, far exceeding all other nations, parsimonious and avaricious; the Tuscans beyond all other Italians; the Florentines beyond all other Tuscans. So scandalous an example of it, as occurred a few months ago, is, I hope and believe, unparallelled. Prince ******* married a woman of immense fortune, by whom he has a family of eight children. He took a mistress: the wife languished and died. He gave orders that all her cloaths should be sold by auction in his palace; old gowns, old petticoats, old shifts, old shoes, old gloves; even articles at the value of one penny, such as excited the derision of some, the blushes of others, the horror of not a few.

There had been no quarrel between the wife and husband. She was beautiful, engaging, sweet-tempered, compliant, domestic. She sank from the world which her virtues had adorned, and had been seven days in her grave, when prostitutes paraded the street before her palace, wearing those dresses in which the most exemplary of mothers had given the last lessons of morality to her daughters. The prince is one of the richest men on the continent: he is supposed to spend about a tenth of his income: and the sale produced fourteen pounds.

slavemasters in our American islands, and their gangs are under stronger and severer discipline. The refuse of manhood exercises the tyranny of Xerxes in the cloak and under the statutes of Pythagoras.

LEOPOLD.

I would willingly see several religions in my states, knowing that in England and Holland they are checks one upon another. The quaker inverts his eye and rebukes his graceless son, by shewing him how industrious and tractable is the son of some fierce presbyterian: the catholic points to the daughter of a socinian, and cries shame upon his own, educated as she was in the purity of the faith, in the religion of so many forefathers. Catholicism loses somewhat of its poisonous strong savour, by taking root in a well-pulverized well-harrowed soil. As competition levels the price of provisions, so maintains it the just value of sects. Whatever is vicious in one, is kept under by the concourse of others, and each is emulous to prove the superiority of its doctrines by honesty and regularity of life. If ever the English could be brought to one opinion in politics or religion, they would lose the energy of their character and the remains of their freedom. In England the catholics are unexceptionably good members of

society, although the gentlemen of that persuasion, I hear, are generally more ignorant than others, partly by the jealous spirit of their church, and partly by an ungenerous exclusion from the universities. They keep, as here, a chaplain in their houses, but always a man of worth, and not combining as in Italy a plurality of incongruous offices. Here a confessor, in many instances, is tutor to the children, house-steward to the father, and *cavaliere serviente* to the mother. He thinks it would be a mockery of God to call her to confess, without a decent provision of slight transgressions. He cures her indigestions by a dram, her qualms of conscience by a sacrament.

PRESIDENT.

Both morality and learning require the sound of feet running fast behind them, to keep them from loitering and flagging. When Calvinism was making a progress in France, the catholic bishops were learned men; indeed so learned, that Joseph Scaliger, himself a calvinist, acknowledged in the latter part of his life their immense superiority over the rising sect. At present there is only one bishop in France capable of reading a chapter in the Greek testament, which every schoolboy in England, for whatever profession he is intended, must do at eleven years of age. I

would then recommend a free commerce both of matter and of mind. I would let men enter their own churches with the same freedom as their own houses; and I would do it without a homily on graciousness or favour: for *tyranny* itself is to me a word less odious than *toleration.*

LEOPOLD.

I am placed among certain small difficulties. Tuscany is my farm: the main object of all proprietors is their income. I would see my cattle fat and my labourers well-cloathed; but I would not permit the cattle to break down my fences, nor the labourer to dilapidate my buildings. I will preserve the catholic religion, in all its dogmas, forms, discipline, and ceremonies: it is the pommel of a sovran's sword, and the richest jewel in his regalia: no bull however shall squeeze out blood under me, no faggot sweat out heresy, no false key shall unlock my treasury. The propensity will always exist. The system has been called *imperium in imperio,* very unwisely: it was *imperium super imperio,* until it taught kings to profit by its alphabet, its cyphers, and its flagellations. You complain that I have softened my mud. This is the season for treading and kneading it; and there are no better means of doing so, none cheaper, none more effectual, than by keep-

ing a *posse* of priests upon the platform. America will produce disturbances in Europe by her emancipation from England. The example will operate in part, not principally. Wherever there is a national debt, disproportionably less rapid in its extinction than in its formation, there is a revolutionary tendency; this will spread where there is none, as maladies first engendered in the air are soon communicated by contact to the sound and healthy. Various causes will be attributed to the effect; even the books of philosophers. All the philosophers in the world would produce a weaker effect in this business than one blind ballad-singer. Principles are of slower growth than passions: and the hand of Philosophy, holden out to all, there are few who press cordially: and who are those? the disappointed, the contemplative, the retired, the timid. Did Cromwel read Plato? did the grocers of Boston read Locke? The true motives, in political affairs, are often very improbable. Men who never heard of philosophy but to sneer at it after dinner, will attribute to it all those evils which their own venality and corruption have engendered, and not from any spirit of falsehood, but from incompetency of judgement and reflection. What is the stablest in itself is not always so in all places: marble is harder and more durable

than timber: but the palaces of Venice and Amsterdam would have sunken into the deep without wooden piles for their foundation. Single government wants those manifold props which are supplied well-seasoned by catholicism. A king indeed may lose his throne by indiscretion or inadvertency, but the throne itself will never lose its legs in any catholic state. Never will any republican or any mixed constitution exist seven years, where the hierarchy of Rome hath exerted its potency. Venice and Genoa shew no proofs to the contrary: they arose and grew up while the popes were bishops, and ere mankind had witnessed the wonderful spectacle of an inverted apotheosis. God forbid that any corrupt nation should dream of becoming what America is: if it possesses one single man of reflection, he will demonstrate the utter impracticability of citizenship, where the stronger body of the state, as the clergy must morally be, receives its impulse and agency from without, where it claims to itself a jurisdiction over all, excluding all from any authority over its concerns. This demonstration leads to a sentence, which policy is necessitated to pronounce and humanity is unable to mitigate.

PRESIDENT.

Theories and speculations, which always subvert

religious, never subvert political establishments. Uneasiness makes men shift their postures. National debts produce the same effects as private ones; immorality and a desire of change; the former universally, the latter almost so. A man may well think he pays profusely, who pays a tenth as an ensurance for his property against all the perils of the sea. Does he reason less justly who deems the same sum sufficient for the security of the remainder, in his own lands, in his own house? No conquered people was ever obliged to surrender such a portion of its wealth, present and reversionary, as in our times has been expended voluntarily, in the purchase of handcuffs and fetters for home-consumption. Free nations, for the sake of doing mischief to others, and to punish the offence of pretending to be like them, have consented that the preparation of grain shall be interdicted in their families, that certain herbs shall never be cultivated in their fields and gardens, that they shall never roast certain beans, nor extract certain liquors, and that certain rooms in their houses shall admit no light. Domitian never did against his enemies, what these free nations have done against themselves.

The sea-tortoise can live without its brains, an

old discovery! men can govern without theirs, an older still!

LEOPOLD.

I am influenced but little by opinions: they vary the most where they are strongest and loudest. Here they breathe softly, and not against me; for I excite the hopes of many by extinguishing those of few. What I have begun I will continue, but I see clearly where I *ought* to stop, and know to a certainty, which few reformers do, where I *can*. Exempt from all intemperance of persecution, as from all taint of bigotry, I am disposed to see Christianity neither in diamonds nor in tatters: I would take down her toupee and sell her rouge-box, to procure her a clean shift and inoffensive stockings.

I must persuade both clergy and laity that God understands Italian. Ricci, the bishop of Pistoja, is convinced of this important truth: but many of his diocesans, not disputing his authority, argue that, although God indeed may understand it, yet the saints, to whom they offer up incense, and in whom they have greater confidence, may not; and that being, for the greater part, old men, it might incommode them in the regions of bliss to alter pristine habits... Warmly and heartily do I thank you, M. Du Paty, for your observations. You have treated me really as your equal.

PRESIDENT.

I should rather thank your Imperial Highness for your patience and confidence. If I have presented one rarity to the Palazzo Pitti, I have been richly remunerated with another. There are only two things which authorise a man out of office to speak his sentiments freely in the courts of princes; very small stature and very small probity. You have abolished this most ancient statute, in favour of a middle-sized man, who can reproach himself with no perversion or neglect of justice in a magistrature of twenty years.

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Italy has been reinstated in all her privileges and enjoyments; and the beneficent hands by which they have been rescued and restored are preparing the same for the rest of Europe. In the following verses may be found something like the sentiments attributed to the interlocutors in this Conversation.

Italia! omnigenis salve ditissima divis!
Scirem, utinam, quando sis genitura viros.
Te quondam populosque tuos urbs una subegit,
Maternæque dedit viscera secta lupæ:
Et nunc obtinuit Capitolia Noricus hostis,
Castraque Taurini, Parthenopesque sinum;
Imposuit profugos sua post perjuria reges...
Accipe... sunt meritis præmia digna tuis.

The same poet, five years ago, wrote these iambics.

Fugit Tyrannis exulatque; vicimus
O milites civesque! nunc lætamini,
Nunc serta nectite orbis omnes incolæ,
Amoris omnes viva serta nectite!
Eia! unde triste vos tenet silentium?
Respondeas, Ibere! quid mussas, Tage!
Bæti! at beata rura tu certe colis...
Argute Minci, cur fleas, cur ingemas?
Avena quid vult illa quam sic abjicis?
Tuque ante cunctos, magne divorum comes,
Cœlo fluenta solus educens tua,
Eridane! vultum cur paternum averteris?
Sequar fugacem in ultima ostia, in mare
Sequar, latentes proderunt parum Hadriæ
Specus... Quid est quòd, immemor tot urbium
Utrâque ripâ, non poetarum choris,
Non montibus juveris, aut campo, aut freto?
Quocunque vertor orbe terrarum, simul
Videtur eloqui omnium indignatio...
" O Servitutis execranda hæreditas,
" Vel hâc vel illâ (quàm parum refert!) manu
" Impertienda es! heu neque immerentibus!
" Promissa, sed promissa regibus novis,
" Lux liberorum ubi occidit! mortalium
" Non es, futura semper es, Felicitas!
" Tu verò amice hos qui locos deveneris,
" Poeta, faustam gratulaturus vicem,
" Abi... idque crede, ne nimis serò scias,
" Culpa est fuisse conscium nostri statûs."

# CONVERSATION XIV.

## DEMOSTHENES

AND

## EUBULIDES.

# DEMOSTHENES

AND

# EUBULIDES.

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EUBULIDES.

You have always convinced me, O Demosthenes, while you were speaking; but I had afterwards need to be convinced again; and I acknowledge that I do not yet believe in the necessity, or indeed in the utility of a war with Philip.

DEMOSTHENES.

He is too powerful.

EUBULIDES.

This is my principal reason for recommending that we should abstain from hostilities; when you have said that *he* is too powerful, you have also said that *we* are too weak: we are still bleeding from the Spartan.

DEMOSTHENES.

All I could offer in reply, O Eubulides, I have

already spoken in public, and I would rather not enlarge at present on the subject. Come, tell me freely what you think of my speech.

EUBULIDES.

In your language, O Demosthenes, there is a resemblance to the Ilissus, whose waters, as you must have observed, are in most seasons pure and limpid and equable in their course, yet abounding in depths of which, when we discern the bottom, we wonder that we discern it so clearly: the same river at every storm swells into a torrent, without ford or boundary, and is the stronger and the more impetuous from resistance.

DEMOSTHENES.

Language is part of a man's character.

EUBULIDES.

It often is artificial.

DEMOSTHENES.

Often both are so. I spoke not of such language as that of Gorgias and Isocrates and other rhetoricians, but of that which belongs to eloquence, of that which enters the heart, however closed against it, of that which pierces like the sword of Perseus, of that which carries us away upon its point easily as Medea her children, and holds the world below in the same suspense and terror.

I had to form a manner, with great models on one side of me and Nature on the other. Had I imitated Plato (the writer then most admired) I must have fallen short of his amplitude and dignity; and his sentences are seldom such as could be admitted into a popular harangue. Xenophon is elegant, but unimpassioned, and not entirely free, I think, from affectation. Herodotus is the most faultless and perhaps the most excellent of all: what simplicity! what sweetness! what harmony! not to mention his sagacity of inquiry and his accuracy of description: he could not however form an orator for the times in which we live. Aristoteles and Thucydides were before me: I trembled lest they should lead me where I might raise a recollection of Pericles, whose plainness and conciseness and gravity they have imitated, not always with success. Laying down these qualities as the foundation, I have ventured on more solemnity, more passion; I have also been studious to bring the powers of *action* into play, that great instrument in exciting the affections which Pericles disdained. He and Jupiter could strike any head with their thunderbolts and stand serene and motionless; I could not.

EUBULIDES.

Your opinion of Pericles hath always been the

same, but I have formerly heard you mention Plato with much less esteem than today.

DEMOSTHENES.

When we talk diversely of the same person or thing, we do not of necessity talk inconsistently. There is much in Plato which a wise man will commend, there is more that will captivate an unwise one. The irony in his Dialogues has amused me frequently and greatly, and the more because in others I have rarely found it accompanied with fancy and imagination. If I however were to become a writer of dialogues, I should be afraid of using it so constantly, often as I am obliged to do so in my orations. Woe betide those who force us into it by injustice and presumption! Do they dare to censure us? they who are themselves the dust that sullies the wing of genius. Had I formed my opinion of Socrates from Plato, I should call Socrates a sophist. Who would imagine on reading Plato, that his master instead of questioning and quibbling, had occupied his time in shewing the uses and offices of Philosophy? There is as wide a difference between the imputed and the real character of this man, as there is between him who first discovered corn growing, and him who first instructed us how to grind it and purify it and prepare it for our sustenance.

EUBULIDES.

Before him Pythagoras and Democritus and, earlier still, Pherecydes...

DEMOSTHENES.

Of the latter our accounts are contradictory. I entertain no doubt that the knowledge, the prudence, the authority of Pythagoras were greater than those of any man, who, under the guidance of the Gods, hath enlightened the regions of Europa.

EUBULIDES.

He must have been a true lover of wisdom, as he modestly called himself, to have traveled so far into countries known hardly by name in Greece.

DEMOSTHENES.

He sought some congenial soul. If two great men are existing at the extremities of the earth, they will seek each other.

EUBULIDES.

Greatness is unsociable.

DEMOSTHENES.

It loves itself, it loves what generates it, what proceeds from it, what partakes its essence. If you have formed any idea of greatness, O Eubulides, which corresponds not with this description, efface it and cast it out. I admire in Pythagoras a disdain and contempt of dogmatism amidst the plenitude of power. He adapted his institutions

to the people he would enlighten and direct. What portion of the world was ever so happy, so peaceable, so well-governed, as the cities of Magna Græcia? While they retained his manners they were free and powerful: some have since declined, others are declining, and perhaps at a future and not a distant time they may yield themselves up to despotism. In a few ages more, those flourishing towns, those inexpugnable citadels, those temples which one would deem eternal, will be hunted for in their wildernesses, like the boars and stags. Already there are philosophers who would remedy what they call popular commotions by hereditary despotism, and who think it as natural and reasonable, as that children who cry should be compelled to sleep: and there likewise are honest citizens who, when they have chewed their fig and swallowed it, say; *yes, 'twere well.* What an eulogy on the human understanding! to assert that it is dangerous to choose a succession of administrators from the wisest of mankind, and advisable to derive it from the weakest! There have been free Greeks within our memory, who would have entered into an holy alliance with the most iniquitous and most insolent of usurpers, Alexander of Pheræ, a territory in which Thebe, who murdered her husband, is praised above all

others of both sexes. O Juno! may such marriages be frequent in such countries!

Look at history: where do you find in continuation three hereditary kings, of whom one at the least was not inhuman or weak in intellect? Either of these qualities may subvert a state, exposing it first to many sufferings. In our Athenian constitution, if we are weakly governed or capriciously, which hardly can happen, the mischief is transitory and reparable; one year closes it; and the people, both for its satisfaction and its admonition, sees that no corruption, no transgression, in its magistrates, is unregarded or unchastized. This of all advantages is the greatest, the most corroborative of power, the most tutelary of morals. I know that there are many in Thrace, and some in Sicily, who would recall my wanderings with the most perfect good-humour and complacency. Demosthenes has not lived, has not reasoned, has not agitated his soul, for them: he leaves them in the quiet possession of all their moulten arguments, and in the persuasive hope of all their bright reversions. Pythagoras could have had little or no influence on men like these: he raised up higher, who kept them down. It is easier to make an impression upon sand than upon marble, but it is easier to make a just one upon marble than upon sand.

Uncivilized as were the Gauls, he with his moderation and prudence hath softened the ferocity of their religion, and hath made it so contradictory and inconsistent that the first man amongst them who reasons will subvert it. He did not say, *You shall no longer sacrifice your fellow creatures:* he said, *sacrifice the criminal.* Other nations do the same; often wantonly, always vindictively: the Gauls appease by it, as they imagine, both society and the Gods. He did not say, *After a certain time even this outrage on Nature must cease;* but he said; *We have souls which pass into other creatures: our dreams prove it: if they are not reminiscences of what has happened or been represented in our actual life, they must be of what passed before: for from a confusion of brain, to which some attribute them, there can arise nothing so regular and beautiful as many of these visions which you have all experienced.*

A belief in the transmigration of souls will abolish by degrees all inhumanity. I know nothing else that can: in other words, I know nothing else that is worthy to be called religion.

EUBULIDES.

But what absurdity!

DEMOSTHENES.

I discover no absurdity in making men gentler and kinder. I would rather worship an onion or

a crust of bread, than a God who requires me to kill an ox or kid. The idea, not of having lost her daughter, but of having lost her by a sacrifice, fixed the dagger in the grasp of Clytæmnestra. Let us observe, O Eubulides, the religion of our country, be it what it may, unless it command us to be cruel or unjust. In religion, if we are right, we do not know that we are so; if we are wrong, we would not. Above all, let us do nothing and say nothing which may abolish or diminish in the hearts of the vulgar the sentiments of love and fear: on the contrary, let us perpetually give them fresh excitement and activity, by baring them to the heavens. On the modifications of love it is unnecessary to expatiate; but I am aware that you may demand of me what excitement is required to fear. Amongst its modifications are veneration and obedience, against the weakening of which we ought to provide and guard, particularly in what relates to our magisterial and military chiefs.

EUBULIDES.

I do not conceive that Pythagoras hath left behind him in Gaul, unless at Massilia, the remembrance of his doctrines or of his name.

DEMOSTHENES.

We hear little of the Gauls. It appears however that this most capricious and most cruel of

nations is building cities and establishing communities. The most arrogant, the most ungrateful, the most unthinking of mankind have not forgotten the wisdom or the services of Pythagoras. Ask them who was their legislator... they answer you Samotes: ask them who was Samotes, they reply, *A wise man who came amongst us long ago from beyond the sea:* for barbarians have little notion of times, and run wildly into far antiquity. The man of Samos was in fact their legislator, or rather their teacher, and it is remarkable that they should have preserved the name in such integrity.

Democritus, whom you mentioned, contradicts our senses: he tells us that colours have no colour. But his arguments are so strong, his language so clear, his pretensions so modest and becoming, I place more confidence in him, than in others: future philosophers may demonstrate to calmer minds what we have not the patience to investigate*.

EUBULIDES.

Plato hath not mentioned him.

DEMOSTHENES.

O greatness! what art thou, and where is thy foundation! I speak not, Eubulides, of that which

* Newton has elucidated the theory of colours first proposed by Democritus, the loss of whose voluminous works is the greatest that Philosophy has sustained.

the vulgar call greatness, a phantom stalking forward from a saltmarsh in Bœotia, or from a crevice in some rock of Sunium, or of Taxos*, but the highest, the most illustrious, the most solid among men, what is it! Philosophy gives us arms against others, not against ourselves, not against those domestic traitors, those homestead incendiaries, the malignant passions; arms that are brilliant on the exercise-ground, but brittle in the fight, when the most dangerous of enemies is pressing us. Early love was never so jealous in any one as Philosophy in Plato. He resembles his own idea of God, whose pleasure in the solitudes of eternity is the contemplation of himself.

EUBULIDES.

It has been suggested to me, that Aristoteles, when he remarks that, by the elongation of the last member in a sentence, a dignity is added to composition, looked towards you who, as you have often heard the rhetoricians say, are sometimes inattentive or indifferent to nobility of expression.

DEMOSTHENES.

When Aristoteles gives an opinion upon eloquence I listen with earnestness and respect: so wise a man can say nothing inconsiderately: his

* Taxos was rich in silver-mines.

own style on all occasions is exactly what it should be: his sentences, in which there are no cracks or inequalities, have always their proper tone: whatever is rightly said, sounds rightly.

Ought I to speak nobly, as you call it, of base matters and base men? ought my pauses to be invariably the same? would Aristoteles wish that a coat of mail should be as flowing as his gown? Let peace be perfect peace, war decisive war: but let Eloquence move upon earth with all the facilities of change that belong to the Gods themselves; only let her never be idle, never be vain, never be ostentatious; for these are indications of debility. We, who have habituated ourselves from early youth to the composition of sonorous periods, know that it requires more skill to finger and stop our instrument than to blow it. When we have gained over the ear to our party, we have other work to do, and sterner and rougher. Then comes forward *action*, not unaccompanied by vehemence. Pericles, you have heard, used none, but kept his arm wrapped up within his vest. Pericles was in the enjoyment of that power which his virtues and his abilities so well deserved. If he had carried in his bosom the fire that burns in mine, he would have kept his hand outside. By the contemplation of men like me, Aristoteles is what he is; and,

instead of undervaluing, I love him the better for it. Do we not see with greater partiality and fondness those who have been educated and fed upon our farms, than those who come from Orchomenos or Mantinea? If he were now amongst us in Athens, what would he think of two or three haranguers, who deal forth his metaphysics by the pailful in their addresses to the people?

EUBULIDES.

I heard one, some little time since, who believed he was doing so, ignorant that the business of metaphysics is rather to analyse than to involve. He avoided all plain matter, he rejected all idiom...

DEMOSTHENES.

What an admirable definition have you given, unintentionally, of the worst public speaker possible! I will add, with equal confidence, of the worst writer. If I send to Hymettus for a hare, I expect to distinguish it at dinner by its flavour, as readily, as before, by its ears and feet. The people you describe to me, soak out all the juices of our dialect.

EUBULIDES.

They could do nothing better. To come again with you into the kitchen, if they can only give us tripe, let them give it clean.

DEMOSTHENES.

I have been careful to retain as much of our idiom as I could, often at the peril of being called ordinary and vulgar. Nations in a state of decay lose their idiom, which loss is always precursory to that of freedom. What your father and grandfather used as an elegance in conversation, is now abandoned to the populace, and every day we miss a little of our own and collect a little from strangers: this prepares us for a more intimate union with them, in which we merge at last altogether. Every good writer has much idiom; it is the life and spirit of language; and none ever entertained a fear or apprehension that strength and sublimity were to be lowered and weakened by it. Speaking to the people, I use the people's phraseology: I temper my metal according to the uses I intend it for. In fact no language is very weak in its natural course, until it runs too far; and then the poorest and the richest are ineffectual equally. The habitude of pleasing by flattery makes a language soft; the fear of offending by truth makes it circuitous and conventional. Free governments, where such necessity cannot exist, will always produce true eloquence.

EUBULIDES.

We have in Athens young orators from the

schools, who inform us that no determinate and masculine peculiarities of manner should appear in public: they would dance without displaying their muscles, they would sing without discomposing their lips.

DEMOSTHENES.

I will drag them, so help me Jupiter! back again to their fathers and mothers: I will grasp their wrists so tight, the most perverse of them shall not break away from me. Tempestuous times are coming ... another month or two at farthest, and I will throw such animation into their features and their gestures, you shall imagine they have been singing to the drum and horn, and dancing to dithyrambics. The dustbox of metaphysics shall be emptied no more from the schoolroom into the street. I suspect that I also have heard the very chatterer you mentioned. The other day in the marketplace, I saw a vulgar and clumsy man lifted on a honey-barrel by some grocers and slave-merchants, and the crowd was so dense around me that I could not walk away. A fresh-looking citizen near me nodded and winked at the close of every sentence. Dissembling as well as I could my impatience at his importunity, "*Friend*," said I, "*do believe me, I understand not a syllable of the discourse.*" "*Ah Demosthenes*," whispered

he, "*your time is fairly gone by: we have orators now whom even you, with all your acuteness and capacity, as you yourself have acknowledged to me, cannot comprehend.*" "*Whom will they convince?*" cried I. "*Convince! we come already convinced: we want surprize, as at our theatres, astonishment, as at the mysteries of Eleusis.*" "*But what astonishes, what surprizes you?*" "*To hear an Athenian talk two hours together, hold us all silent and immovable as the figures of Mercury before our doors, and find not a single one amongst us that can carry home with him a thought or an expression.*" "*Thou art right,*" I exclaimed; "*he is greater than Triptolemus: he not only gives you a plentiful meal out of chaff and husks, but he persuades you that it is a savoury repast.*" "*By Jupiter!*" swore aloud my disenchanted friend, "*he persuades us no such thing: but every one is ashamed of being the first to acknowledge, that he never was master of a particle out of all he had listened to and applauded.*" I had the curiosity to inquire who the speaker was. "*What! do not you know Anædestatus!*" said he, making a mark of interrogation upon my ribs, with a sharper elbow than from his countenance I could have imagined had belonged to him; "*the clever Anædestatus, who came*

*into notice as a youth, by the celebration in verse of a pebble at the bottom of the Cephisus. He forthwith was presented to Anglus, who experienced a hearty pleasure in seducing him away from his guardians. Anglus on his deathbed (for the Gods allowed him one) recommended the young Anædestatus warmly to his friends: such men have always many, and those the powerful. Fortunate had it been for our country if he had pilfered only the verses he pronounced. His new patrons connived at his withdrawing from the treasury no less than six hundred talents." "Impossible! six hundred talents are sufficient for the annual stipend of all our civil magistrates, from the highest to the lowest, and of all the generals in our republic and its dependencies." "It was before you came forward into public life, O Demosthenes: but my father can prove the exactness of my statement. The last little sip from the reservoir was seventy talents* for a voyage to Lesbos, and a residence there of about three months, to settle the value of forty skins of wine owing to the Lesbians in the time of Thrasybulus. This, I know not by what oversight, is legible among the accounts."* Indignant at what I heard,

* Seventy talents, in round numbers, 14000 pounds sterling.

I threatened to call him before the people .... "*Let him alone;*" said slowly in an undervoice my prudent friend: "*he has those about him who will swear, and adduce the proofs, that you are holding a traitorous correspondence with Philip or Artaxerxes.*" I began to gaze in some indignation on his florid and calm countenance, he winked again, again accosted me with his elbow and withdrew.

EUBULIDES.

Happy Athenians! who have so many great men of so many kinds, all peculiar to yourselves, and can make one even out of Anædestatus.

# CONVERSATION XV.

## THE ABBÉ DELILLE

AND

## WALTER LANDOR.

# THE ABBÉ DELILLE

AND

# WALTER LANDOR.

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THE Abbé Delille was the happiest of creatures when he could weep over the charms of innocence and of the country in some crowded and fashionable côterie at Paris. We embraced most pathetically on our first meeting there, as if the one were condemned to quit the earth, the other to live upon it.

DELILLE.

You are reported to have said that descriptive poetry has all the merits of a pockethankerchief that smells of roses.

LANDOR.

This, if I said it, is among the things which are neither false enough nor true enough to be displeasing. But the Abbé Delille has merits of his own. To translate Milton well, is more laud-

able than originality in trifling matters; just as to transport an obelisk from Egypt, and to erect it in one of the squares, must be considered a greater labour than to build a new chandler's shop.

DELILLE.

Milton is indeed extremely difficult to translate; for, however noble and majestic, he is sometimes heavy, and often rough and unequal.

LANDOR.

Dear abbé, porphyry is heavy, gold is heavier: Ossa and Olympus are rough and unequal. On the contrary, the steppes of Tartary are high, but of uniform elevation: there is not a rock, nor a birch, nor a cytisus, nor an arbutus, upon them, great enough to shelter a new-dropt lamb. Level the Alps one with another, and where is their sublimity? Raise up the vale of Tempe to the downs above, and where are those sylvan bays and harbours, in which the imagination watches while the soul reposes; those recesses in which the Gods partook the weaknesses of mortals, and mortals the enjoyments of the Gods!

You have treated our poet with all courtesy and attention: in your trimmed and measured dress he might be taken for a Frenchman. Do not think me flattering. You have conducted Eve from Paradise to Paris, and she really looks pret-

tier and smarter than before she tripped. With what elegance she rises from a most awful dream! you represent her (I repeat your expression) as springing up *en sursaut*, as if you had caught her asleep, and tickled the young creature on that sofa.

Homer and Virgil have been excelled in sublimity by Shakespear and Milton, as the Caucasus and Atlas of the old world by the Andes and Cordilleras of the new: but you would embellish them all.

DELILLE.

I owe to Voltaire my first sentiments of admiration for Milton and Shakespear.

LANDOR.

He stuck to them as a woodpecker to an old forest-tree, only for the purpose of picking out what was rotten. He has made the holes deeper than he found them, and, after all his cries and chatter, has brought home but scanty sustenance to his starveling nest.

DELILLE.

You must acknowledge that there are fine verses in the tragedies of Voltaire.

LANDOR.

Whenever such is the first observation, be as-

sured, M. l'Abbé, that the poem, if heroic or dramatic, is bad. Should a work of this kind be excellent, we say, "*How admirably the characters are sustained! what delicacy of discrimination! There is nothing to be taken away or altered without an injury to the part or to the whole.*" We may afterwards descend on the versification. In poetry there is a greater difference between the good and the excellent than there is between the bad and the good. Poetry has no golden mean: mediocrity here is of another metal, which Voltaire however had skill enough to encrust and polish. In the least wretched of his tragedies, whatever is tolerable is Shakespear's; but, gracious heaven! how deteriorated! When he pretends to extoll a poet, he chooses some defective part, and renders it more so whenever he translates it. I will repeat a few verses from Metastasio in favour of my assertion. Metastasio was both a better critic and a better poet, although of the second order in each quality; his tyrants are less philosophical, and his chambermaids less dogmatic. Voltaire was however a man of abilities, and author of many passable epigrams, besides those which are contained in his tragedies and heroics, though it must be confessed, that, like

your Parisian lackeys, they are usually the smartest when out of place.

DELILLE.

What you call epigram gives life and spirit to grave works, and seems principally wanted to relieve a long poem. I do not see why what pleases us in a star, should not also please us in a constellation. This and versification are the main secrets of French poetry, to which must be added an exactness of thought and a brevity of expression, such for instance as we admire in Boileau. But you promised me something of Metastasio.

LANDOR.

I will repeat the lines with Voltaire's observations.

The king of Parthia is brought in chains before the emperor Hadrian. He has leisure for all the following paraphrase, by which he would signify that his ruin itself shall be subservient to his revenge.

Sprezza il furor del vento
Robusta quercia, avvezza
Di cento verni e cento
Le ingiurie a tolerar.
E se pur cadde al suolo,
Spiega per l' onde il volo,
*E con quel vento istesso*
*Va contrastando* il mar.

Con quel vento istesso! it must make haste then... Voltaire had forgotten the art of concealing his insincerity, when he praised as a *sublime air* the worst and most farfetched thought in all the operas of Metastasio. He could read Italian poetry, he could write French: we have seen how he judged of the least familiar, let us now inquire how he judges of the most. He considers then the following lines in *Mithridate* as a model of perfection.

J'ai sçu par une longue et penible industrie
Des plus mortels venins prevenir la furie.
Ah! qu'il m' eut mieux valu, plus sage ou plus heureux,
Et repoussant les traits d' un amour dangereux,
Ne pas laisser remplir d' ardeurs empoisonées
Un cœur dejà glacé par *le froid des années.*

Alas! the cold of his years, in comparison with the cold of his wit, is but as a flake of snow to a mass of frozen mercury.

DELILLE.

Acknowledge at least that in tales and in history he has done something.

LANDOR.

Yes, he has united them very dexterously. In the lighter touches of irony and derision he excels both Rabelais and Moliere; but in that which requires a certain vigour of conception, and there is a kind which does require it, he falls short of Cer-

vantes and of Swift. You have other historians not only more faithful, but more powerful in style and more profound in thought. I do not even place him on a level with our Hume, and hardly with Robertson, although in composition he may have an advantage over both, certainly over the latter greatly; nor is he at all comparable to Gibbon, whose manner, which many have censured, I think admirably suited to the work. In the decline and fall of the Roman empire there is too much to sadden and disgust: a smile in such a narrative on some occasions is far from unacceptable: if it should be succeeded by a sneer, it is not the sneer of bitterness, which falls not on debility, nor of triumph, which accords not with contempt. His colours, it is true, are gorgeous, like those of the setting sun; and such were wanted. The style is much swayed by the sentiment: would that which is proper for the historian of Fabius and Scipio, of Hannibal and Pyrrhus, be proper too for Augustulus and the popes? Gibbon could be grave when an emperor like Julian commanded it; but could he, or could any one, on rising from the narration of a Greek historian, who has described how an empress played "the royal game of goose?"

DELILLE.

Gibbon, one would imagine, was a mixt production of two different races in Africa, and borrowed the moral features from the one, the physical from the other. The Kabobiguas have no worship, sacrifice, ceremonies, or priests; and the Housouanas have a nose which projects little more than five or six lines; half the face seems to be forehead.

LANDOR.

When Voltaire calls the French poetry strong and energetic, he shews himself insensible that the nature both of the language and of the metre prohibits it: when he calls the Italian weak and effeminate and unfit for action, he overlooks his inconsistency in remarking that "we respect Homer but read Tasso." No continental poet is less weak and effeminate than Chiabrera; whose works, I apprehend, Voltaire was just as incapable of appreciating as Homer's. Did he ever hear of Filicaja? rich in thought as Pindar himself, and more enthusiastic.

DELILLE.

Enthusiastic as Pindar! ah M. Landor!

LANDOR.

Abbé, I said *more* enthusiastic, for in criticism

I love correctness. We have lost the greater and perhaps the better part of Pindar's poetry: what remains is more distinguished for exquisite taste, than for enthusiasm. There is a grandeur of soul which never leaves him even in domestic scenes. His genius does not rise on points or peaks of sublimity, but pervades all things with a vigorous and easy motion, such as the poets attribute to the herald of the Gods. He is remarkable for the rich economy of his ideas and the temperate austerity of his judgement: he never says more than what is proper nor otherwise than what is best, and he appears the superior of mortals in the perfection of wisdom as of poetry.

The business of this art is to chasten and elevate the mind by exciting and regulating the better passions, and to impress on it lessons of terror and of pity by exhibiting the self-chastisement of the worse. There should be as much of passion as is possible with as much of reason as is compatible with it. How admirable is the union of these in the ode of Filicaja to Sobieski!

DELILLE.

Do you really then prefer this Italian to Boileau? his ode to the king is fine.

LANDOR.

There is almost as much difference between his

ode and the Italian, as between Sobieski and Louis; almost as much as between the liberation of Europe and the conflagration of the Palatinate. Give me the volume, if that in your hand is it.

"The *high* wisdom of a *young* hero is not the *tardy* fruit of slow *old* age."

Dear Abbé, can you ever have read this commencement, and call the author a man of genius or taste?

... Ma muse tremblante
Fuit d'un si *grand fardeau* la charge *trop pesante.*

Vulgarity in the metaphor and redundance in the expression; and look! it occurs again at the conclusion. Addison tells you that he does, what he gives no signs of doing, that he

"*Bridles* in his struggling Muse with pain."

But it is better to turn a Muse into a mare than into a mule or ass; and Addison has redeemed the wretchedness of his poetry by the suavity and humour of his prose.

Et tandis que ton bras des peuples *redouté*
Va le foudre à la main retablir l'equité.

I always fancied that the *foudre* is rather a destroyer than an establisher. But why was the arm of Louis feared by the nations, if it was armed only to establish equity? The *arm* with

the thunderbolt in the *hand* is worse than tautology, if indeed any thing can be worse in a poet than this most obvious proof of debility.

Let us turn to his satires.

SATIRE I.

Et puis, comment percer *cette foule effroyable*
De rimeurs affamés...*dont le nombre l'accable*...
Un lit et deux placets composoient tout son bien;
Ou, pour en mieux parler, Saint-Amant n'avoit rien.

It would puzzle me to divine in what this *mieux parler* consists. There never was a verse more perfectly idle than this better-spoken one, or what would incurr more ridicule in any notoriously bad writer. The bed and the *deux placets* shew the extremes of Saint-Amant's poverty, without any expenditure of wit or fancy to light up the chamber: any other piece of worthless furniture might have been added. This however did not suit the Rhyme, Boileau's goddess of Necessity. He therefore ridicules the man for not having what he had just before ridiculed him for having.

SATIRE II.

Pour qui tient Apollon tous ses trésors ouverts,
Et qui sçais à quel coin se marquent les bons vers.

Behold the art of sinking! Moliere goes into Apollo's treasury, and finds out in it how he marks his pockethankerchief.

SATIRE III.

Nothing can be more flat and out of character than the last lines, from a person who professes just before an utter indifference to the pleasures of the table.

SATIRE IV.

Tout hérissé de grec, tout bouffi d' arrogance.

All this, excepting the last word, is in another place. The idea of *hérissé de grec* arose, I presume, from the sharp and slender forms of the Greek letters, as we see them printed. A line of Greek appeared to Boileau like a hedge of aloes.

La même erreur les fait errer diversement.

A contradiction the more apparent, as he had mentioned the *hundred* roads in which the travellers wandered, some to the right, some to the left. He has ridiculed the errors into which men have run from the imperfection of their reason: a great folly! he now gravely rails at reason itself: a greater!

Que si d'un sort facheux la maligne inconstance.

The inconstancy of a *sort facheux* was never before complained of, still less called *malignant*.

Enfin un médecin fort expert en son art
Le guérit ... par adresse ou plutôt par hazard.

It is quite unimportant to the story, if not so to the verse, whether the physician cured the man by skill or chance; but to say that he was *fort expert en son art*, and subjoin that he effected his cure *plutôt par hazard*, proves that the poet must have chosen his expressions altogether at hazard.

SATIRE V.

*On fait cas* d'un coursier qui, fier ... et plein de cœur ...

does what?

Fait paroître en courant sa bouillante vigueur.

This is natural enough: and could not well be otherwise: but what think you of a horse that *jamais ne se lasse?* Do not be surprized: he becomes just like another, and

dans la carrière
S'est couvert *mille fois* ... d'une *noble* poussière ...

That is, as your countrymen would have said, not Monsieur Poussiere, but Monsieur *de* Poussiere, a most important distinction.

SATIRE VI.

A man who reasons, must be aware how silly it is to write an angry satire on *cats:* yet the first thing that provokes the complaints of Boileau

against Paris, is the noise of these animals, and their dangerous conspiracies, in league with the rats, against his repose. He then calls this disturbance the least of his misfortunes, and attacks the cocks, who, of course, are a plague peculiar to Paris. Yet neither the cocks nor the blacksmith, who falls next under his displeasure, are, if we may judge from the outcry he makes, so grievous an evil to him, as the former licentious disturbers of his peace.

Les voleurs à l'instant s'emparent de la ville.
Le bois *le plus funeste* et le moins fréquenté
Est, au prix de Paris, un lieu de sûreté.

Exaggeration may be carried to any highth where there is wit, but rolls down like a load of gravel where there is none.

Malheur donc a celui qu'une affaire imprévue
Engage un peu trop tard au détour d'une rue!

He does not seem aware that all the praises he has been lavishing on Louis are worth nothing, if there is the slightest foundation for this complaint. Thieves are not subjects for satire; but those are truly so whose capitals are crowded with them.

Il faudroit, dans l'enclos d'un vaste logement,
Avoir loin de la rue un autre appartement.

This is curious: for it demonstrates to us that

there certainly must have been a time, when it was considered or offered, as wit, satire, or moral.

SATIRE VII.

Mais tout fat me deplait...et me blesse les yeux;
Je le poursuis partout.

This is idle and silly; if it were practicable, it would be the ruin of Satire.

DELILLE.

Turn over, and you will find Boileau warmed by the fine French sentiment of loyalty to his king. Aye, that pleases you, I see.

LANDOR.

No sentiment is more just or reasonable than loyalty, but it should belong as much to kings as to their people: where it is not reciprocal it is worth nothing. What insincerity! what baseness! to rave against the wild ambition of Alexander, who had all the spirit and all the talents of a consummate warrior, and to crouch at the feet of Louis with every expression of homage and admiration; of Louis, who had no such talents, no such spirit, who exposed his person in no battle, but who ordered a massacre to win the favour of a saint, and consumed a province to cure a heresy: a coward, a bigot, perfidious, ungrateful, perjured, sacrilegious, who died so despised and hated, that his worshippers jumped up from their kneeling,

and pelted his carcase with mire and ordure as it went to burial.

DELILLE.

Ah, M. Landor, you cannot do him justice. You must exaggerate. He is the Grand Monarque.

LANDOR.

This satire is borrowed in many parts from Horace, in many from Juvenal, yet Boileau has contrived to sink all the gaiety of the one, and to weaken with cold and hoarseness all the declamation of the other.

SATIRE IX.

C'est à vous, mon Esprit, à qui je veux parler.

It is a pity that his *Esprit* was not summoned to this conference earlier; but even now it is only called to be talked to, and has more to hear than to say.

Mais moi qui, *dans le fond,* sçais bien ce ....

Significant nod, to give the sentence the appearance of wit, which, if it lies anywhere in it, lies *dans le fond.*

Phebus a-t-il pour vous applani le Parnasse?

The word *applani* is not a very happy one. The difficulties of Parnassus are the triumphs of the poet. I must observe here, that Apollo, Par-

nassus, &c. are too frequently used by your poets, and that nothing shows a barrenness of invention more evidently, than this perpetual recurrence to mythology on subjects unconnected with it.

> Et ne sçavez-vous pas que, sur ce mont sacré,
> Qui ne vole au sommet tombe au plus bas degré.

This is neither true nor ingenious. Horace has misled him by being misunderstood, where he says

> . . . mediocribus esse poetis
> Non homines, non dî, non concessere columnæ.

Now Horace himself, and Catullus, and Tibullus, have never reached nor attempted to reach the summit of Parnassus; and equally certain is it that they have not fallen *au plus bas degré*. Their poetry is excellent in its kind; so is that of La Fontaine. It is only those whose poetry has risen no higher than to mediocrity in its kind, whatever that kind may be, whose existence as poets is destined to a short duration. Catullus and Horace will be read as long as Homer and Virgil, and more often and by more readers.

> Par l' *eclat d'un fardeau* trop pesant à porter.

This is the third time, within a few pages, that I have observed the metaphor, but I never heard until now that a *fardeau* could have an *eclat*. If

it ever is attended by one, it must be, not while it is borne, but at the moment when it is thrown off.

Peindre Bellone *en feu,* tonnant de toutes parts . . .

And what else? Mars, Minerva, Jupiter, the Fates, the Furies!

Et le Belge effrayé . . .

but surely in some act of awful devotion . . . that, if we fall from such a highth, it may be into the bosom of Pity. Ah no!

. . . fuyant sur ses ramparts.

How contemptible are these verses on Bellona and the Dutchman, in comparison with those they are intended to imitate.

Cupidum, pater optime, vires
Deficiunt: neque enim quivis horrentia pilis
Agmina, nec fractâ pereuntes cuspide Gallos,
Aut labentis equo describat vulnera Parthi.

DELILLE.

This satire contains the line which has been so often quoted,

Et le clinquant du Tasse à tout l'or de Virgile,

in which Boileau has scarcely shewn all his wonted discrimination. Surely Tasso is a superb poet.

LANDOR.

A few remarks on that foolish verse. Your poets have always felt a violent jealousy of the Italian. If Virgil had lived in the age of Tasso, and Tasso in the age of Virgil, Boileau would have transferred and commuted the designations, and have given the tinsel to Virgil, the gold to Tasso. There is little of tinsel in the Gerusalemme, and much of gold. The poet fails whenever he attempts the sublime, generally so called, but he seldom overloads his descriptions with idle words or frivolous decorations. His characters are more vivid and more distinct than Virgil's, and greatly more interesting. The heroes of the Eneid are like the half-extinct frescoes of Raphael; but what is wanting in the frescoes of the painter is effaced by time, what is wanting in the figures of the poet was wanting to his genius. No man ever formed in his mind an idea of Dido, or perhaps ever wished to form it; particularly on finding her memory so extensive and her years so mature, that she could recollect the arrival of Teucer at Sidon. Mezentius is called a despiser of the Gods; yet the most pious speech in the Eneid comes from the lips of Mezentius, the most heroical of all the characters in that poem, and the most resigned to the will of heaven.

Ast de me divôm pater atque hominum rex
Viderit.

But who would walk among the delightful scenery of woods and waterfalls, of glades and forests, of vallies in their retirement, and of cornfields in their richness and profusion, for the sake of bringing home a few dry sticks and stubble? or who could receive more pleasure from such an occupation than from surveying the majestic growth of the trees and the rich variety of the foliage?

DELILLE.

I would rather walk through a garden, listening to a fountain, culling roses or sprigs of jessamine, aud meditating upon beautiful Nature. But I am very happy that you admire Tasso. I never could determine, whether he or Virgil had the most grace, and the most elegance, and have often wondered that the same country should have produced, even with the interval of fifteen centuries, two poets almost equal to our Racine.

LANDOR.

Virgil has blemishes like Tasso, and Tasso has beauties like Virgil. The Eneid, I venture to affirm, is the most mis-shapen of epics; an epic of episodes; for these constitute the greater and better part. The Gerusalemme Liberata is, of all such compositions, the most perfect in its plan.

In regard to execution, read any one book attentively, and I am persuaded, M. l'Abbé, that you would rather have written it than all the poetry of Voltaire and Boileau; if indeed there is any thing in either of them that could augment your reputation.

Let us go on with the volume before us.

> de sang-froid... et sans être amoureux,
> Pour quelque Iris en l'air faire le langoureux.

The superfluous on the superfluous! Boileau is one of the *forty* who has done the very thing. One would imagine that there had lived in Paris some lady of this name either by baptism or convention, celebrated as was Phryne. The French poets, if they wished to interest the reader, should at least have engaged a name less hackneyed. Delia, Corinna, Lesbia bring with them great recollections: they are names not taken in vain by all the Romans, in the days of Roman glory. The women to whom they were first given were not ideal. Synonymous with beauty, grace, fondness, tenderness, they delight the memory by locality. We turn with indifference or with digust from the common *Palais-Royal* face of Iris. Boileau might have said to a patron, "you shall be my Apollo, my Richelieu, my Louis:" the expression

has something to rest upon; and why should not love enjoy the same privileges as patronage?

> La Satire, en leçons, en nouveautés fertile,
> Sait seule assaisonner le plaisant et l'utile.

Rhyme consists in similarity of sound, not in identity: an observation that has escaped all your poets, and, what is more wonderful, all the Italian. Satire is less fertile in novelty than any other kind of poetry; and possesses not *alone* the power attributed to it, but, on the contrary, in a less degree than the rest. If it alone were endowed with this faculty, why should poets employ any kind else? Who would write what cannot be pleasant? who what cannot be useful? Satire alone would serve all the purposes both of poetry and of prose; and we might expect to find a good satire in every good treatise on geometry, or metaphysics, or music, or cookery.

> Hé! mon dieu! craignez tout d'un auteur en courroux,
> Qui peut...Quoi?...Je m'entends...Mais encor?...Taisez vous.

Thus ends this long monologue between Boileau and his *Esprit*, which must have rejoiced heartily at its dismissal. Perhaps no line is more suitable to the general French taste than this last... so

many short sentences, coming out singly and with breaks between them, like the notes in a cock's morning hymn, which, allow me to observe, seems to have been taken by your countrymen as a model for their verse, not omitting even the interjectional scream with which it closes;... so many things of which almost every man fancies that he alone is in the secret. I must confess, it is really one to me; and, after all the interpretations it will bear, I find neither wit nor satire in it, nor even the sting of a dead epigram.

DELILLE.

When you compare the tenth satire of Boileau with the manner in which women are attacked by Juvenal, you must be filled with admiration at perceiving how superior French morality is to Roman.

LANDOR.

That is a knotty question, M. l'Abbé: we might bruise our hands, if we were to lay hold of it. It is safer to confine our observations to poetry.

Que, si sous Adam même...et *loin avant Noé.*

The same fault incessantly recurring! What was under Adam, was long before Noah. Your marquisses were not very profound in chronology:

but even the most ignorant of them probably knew this fact; notwithstanding the league between his confessor and his vices to keep him from reading the book where it is recorded. In Boileau there is really more of diffuseness than of brevity: few observe this, because he abounds in short sentences; and few are aware that sentences may be very short and the writer very prolix; as half a dozen white stones rising out of a brook give the passenger more trouble than a plank across it, not to mention the greater chance of wetting the feet.

Villon et Saint-Gelais,
Arioste, Marot, Bocace, Rabelais.

One of the beauties at which Boileau aimed, was the nitching of several names together in a verse, without any other word. Caligula spoke justly and admirably, when he compared the sentences of Seneca to lime without sand. Montesquieu, Voltaire, and their imitators, Frederick of Prussia and Catharine of Russia, were perhaps not aware how perversely they imitated this blameable model of style, and how far they were in general from his gravity and acuteness. Florus however seems chiefly to have captivated the attention and to have formed the manner of Voltaire; as the style of our historian Hume is evi-

dently taken from a French translation of Machiavelli.

Seul avec des valets, souvent voleurs et traîtres,
*Et toujours, a coup sûr, ennemis de leurs maîtres.*

Why so? in any other respect than as *voleurs et traîtres.*

Et, pour le rendre libre, il le faut enchâiner.

This verse alone was worth a pension from Louis. It is the most violent antithesis that ever was constructed: but, as a maxim in politics, it is admirably adapted to your nation, most happy under a despot and most faithful under an usurper.

Et ne presume pas que Vénus ou Satan, &c.

The two mythologies ought never to be confounded. This is worse than Bellona and the Dutchman, or than Mars *et le fameux fort de Skink,*

L'honneur est comme une île escarpée et sans bords:
On n'y peut plus rentrer dès qu'on en est dehors.

The simily is imperfect because the fact is untrue. If an island can be entered once, it can be entered twice.

Avec un air plus sombre
S'en aller mediter une vole au jeu d'hombre.

There is no reason, except the rhyme, for this *air plus sombre.* When the lady only *thinks* of playing, she has encountered no ill success, and expects none; otherwise she would not play.

Comme ce magistrat de hideuse mémoire...

The story of this magistrate is badly told: the progress of his passion is untraced. How much superior is the Sir Balaam of Pope.

Mais qui pourroit compter le nombre des haillons?

This picture is much overcharged. It appears to me that the author had written two descriptions, and, not wishing to lose either, nor knowing what to do with both, tacked them together to compose the tenth satire. He confesses that le récit passe un peu l'*ordinaire,* and desires to know whether it could be given in fewer words. Horace may shew that it can be given both in fewer and better.

Mais qui la priveroit huit jour *de ses plaisirs,*
Et qui, loin d'un galant...objet *de ses désirs.*

It is natural enough that the lady's gallant should be the object of her desires: but what shall we think of a versification which permits *de ses plaisirs* to be followed by *de ses désirs?*

Sa tranquille vertu conserve tous ses crimes.

A violent counterpoint! Antithesis was always fond of making inroads on the borders of absurdity.

SATIRE XII.

Et partout sa doctrine en peu de tems portée...

what can be added to its extent if it was partout? why

Fut du Gange, du Nil, et du Tage écoutée.

Another falling off! Who in the world ever made a voyage to the Ganges for the purpose of arriving at the Tagus? The verse itself did not exact this penance. It could have been written as easily,

Fut du Tage, du Nil, et du Gange écoutée.

This would have described, as it was intended, the progress of the Christian faith. I know not where, in any language, to find such lethargic verses as the following;

Sans simonie on peût contre un bien temporel
Hardiment échanger un bien spirituel.

Of all the wretched poets ridiculed by Boileau, not one, I believe, has written any thing so signally stupid. Turn to the Discours au Roi.

Je vais de toutes parts *où me guide ma veine,*
*Sans tenir en marchant une route certaine;*

Et, sans gêner ma plume en ce libre métier,
Je la laisse au hazard courir sur le papier.

This is untrue: if it were not, he would have written greatly worse than he did. Horace has misled him here, as on other occasions, by being misunderstood: he says,

Ego apis Matinæ
More modoque
Grata carpentis thyma *per laborem*
*Plurimum, &c.*

This relates to the diversity of subjects chosen by the lyric poet: instead of which Boileau speaks merely of satires, and tells us that he corrects the age at hazard, and without the view or intention of correcting it.

Quand je vois ta sagesse en ses justes projets
D'une heureuse abondance enrichir tes sujets.

Here indeed he is a satirist, and a very bold one, and one who does not let his pen run at random over the paper.

Que je n' ai *ni le ton, ni la voix* assez forte.

This verse resembles that in his translation of Sappho,

Je ne sçaurois trouver...de langue...ni de voix.

He places the tone and the voice in contradistinction: but what is the difference? Where the

tone is loud, the voice is loud, at least for the time. Here, as everywhere, you find the never-failing characteristic of your verse. Your heroic line rises and falls at a certain pitch, like the handle of a pump.

DELILLE.

You know, M. Landor, even the glorious orb of Phœbus is defaced by spots. Besides, Boileau's satires were his earliest compositions in verse; and some blemishes in them have been detected by our own critics. But they are excusable, or rather they were inevitable. My experience has taught me that perfection is the offspring of labour, and that the Muses must be wooed before they can be won. You will have remarked, I doubt not, that my later works are much more delicately finished than my earlier. The former put me in mind of some rude village in a remote province, the latter more resemble the gardens of Versailles. It is the same in every art. Vestris himself, though, as you are aware, he was Nature's favorite child, could not invest his limbs with all those graces of attitude and motion, which electrified Paris and the world, until Time had organized his budding powers, and Practise had modulated their rich luxuriance. But turn to Boileau's Epistles,

and in some of them at least you will find nothing against which you can object: the dust with which detraction has rubbed them, has only served to renew their exquisite polish.

LANDOR.

With your permission then we will continue our walk, and if we kick up diamonds instead of dirt, or if my blacking, instead of smearing a face, polishes a shoe, we shall be so much the gainers.

EPITRE I. AU ROI.

Boileau had just issued a long and laborious writ against *Equivoque;* he had despached against it Noah's ark by sea and Heresy by land, when Apollo *éperdu* makes him suddenly the prize of his adversary. He has the simplicity to tell Louis that Apollo has cautioned him thus;

Cette mer où tu cours est célèbre en naufrages.

I hope Louis read this line some years afterwards, when the application of it would scourge him severely. Deprived of all he had acquired by his treachery and violence, unless the nation that brought him upon his knees, had permitted two traitors, Harley and St. John, to second the views of a weak woman and to obstruct those of policy and of England, he had been carted to condign

punishment in the *Place de Grêve* or at Tyburn. Such examples are much wanted, and, as they can rarely be given, should never be omitted.

This man is here called *grand roi* seven times within 200 lines; and to shew that he really was so, the words are written in grand characters.

> Te livrer le Bosphore, et...d'un vers incivil
> Proposer au Sultan de te céder le Nil.

Can any one doubt that, if the letter *e* could have been added to *vers*, the poet would have written *civil* instead of *incivil*. I do not remember in any language an epithet so idle and improper.

> Ne t'avons-nous pas *vu* dans les plaines Belgiques,
> Quand l'ennemi vain*cu*, désertant ses remparts,
> Au devant de ton joug couroit de toutes parts,
> Toi-même te borner?

Yes, with the assistance of William. Your poets and writers of every kind make all the world French. It has been well remarked, that a Frenchman when victorious is most truly called *vaincœur*, and that yours is the only nation upon earth which, when defeated, still retains this characteristic quality, though transferring it to the part which it exposes to the enemy, and to specify which more particularly would not be decorous.

Au devant de ton joug.

Surely a beneficent prince has no occasion to impose a yoke upon those who run toward him so willingly from all parts: nevertheless the sentiment is national.

Iront de ta valeur *effrayer l'univers*...

A wise, beneficent, godlike action! but what follows?

Et camper devant Dôle au milieu des hyvers!!!

He grows more and more reasonable.

On verra les abus par ta main réformés,
La licence et l'orgueil en tous lieux réprimés,
Du débris des traitans ton épargne grossie,
Des subsides *affreux* la rigueur adoucie,
Le soldat, dans la paix, sage et...*laborieux*,
Nos artisans grossiers rendus...*industrieux*.

What idea must that nation entertain of poetry, which can call this so? To encounter these wretched lines, truly

C'est camper devant Dôle au milieu des hyvers.

What more does Louis perform?

Tantôt je tracerai tes *pompeux* bâtiments,
Du loisir d'un héros *nobles* amusements.

These noble amusements, with some others of the same hero, brought France into a state of

poverty and wretchedness, which, neglected by his successors, hurled the least vicious of the family to the scaffold.

EPITRE III.

I turn over the leaves hastily...Here we shall discover what happened when Adam was fallen.

> Le chardon importun hérissa...les guérets,
> Le serpent *venimeux* rampa dans...les forêts.

According to this, matters were bettered. If the serpent had always been there, Adam would have lost nothing, and the importunity of the thistle would have been little to be complained of, if it had only been in the *guérets*.

EPITRE IV. AU ROI.

> Comment en vers heureux assiéger Doësbourg,
> Zutphen, Wagheninghen, Harderwic, Knotzembourg?

These names are tacked together for no other purpose than the rhyme: he complains that they are difficult to pronounce, meaning to say difficult to spell; for certainly none of them is very harsh; but whenever a Frenchman finds a difficulty in spelling a word, he throws in a handful of consonants to help him over; these are the fascines of M. Boileau's approaches. The sound of *Wurts* is not offensive to the ear, without which, the poet says,

Que j'allois à tes yeux étaler de merveilles!

As you French pronounce *Zutphen*, &c. they are truly harsh enough; but that is owing to your nasal twang, the most disagreeable and disgusting of all sounds, being produced by the same means as a stink is rejected, and thus reminding us of one. The syllable *Zut* is not harsher than the first in *Zetes*, or *Phen* than the first in *Phenix*. In fact the sounds of *Grand Roi* are considerably harsher than any that so powerfully offend him, as to stop him with his *raryshew* on his back when he had promised the king a peep at it. I well remember the difficulty I experienced, in teaching a learned countryman of yours that,

*'Twas at the royal feast for Persia won...*

is really a verse, and that *'twas* should not be pronounced *it was*, inviting him to read the first line of the Iliad, in which he stumbled at *thea*, and fell flat upon his face at *Peleiadeo*. I will now shew you what to any organs sensible of harmony is really disagreeable; three similar sounds for instance in one verse, which occurr in the four last of this Epistle, that seems to have been written when the din of the blacksmith's shop, before complained of, was ringing in his ears.

*Non, non,* ne faiso*ns* plus de plaintes inutiles:
Puisqu' ainsi *dans* deux mois tu pre*nds* quara*nte* villes,
Assuré des *bons* vers *dont ton* bras me re*pond,*
Je t' at*tends dans* deux *ans* aux bords de l'Helle*spont.*

I know nothing of the Dutch language, but I will venture a wager with you, M. l'Abbé, that the harshest verse in it is less so than these; and a Greek or an Italian shall decide. There are dozens similar.

Je vais *faire* la *guerre* aux habitans de l'*air.*
Il me *faut* du re*pos,* des prê*s* et des fo*rêts.*
Ont *cru* me rendre affre*ux* aux *yeux* de l'univers.
Ses ecrits pleins de *feu* partout brillent aux *yeux.*

The man must have been born in a sawmill, or in France, or under the falls of Niagara, whose ear can suffer these. In the same Epistle we find,

A ces mots, essuyant sa barbe *limoneuse,*
Il prend d'un vieux guerrier la figure *poudreuse.*

Another *equivoque!* Surely if Boileau had found such poetry in an author of small repute, he would have quoted it as a thing too low to kick up, too flat to ridicule.

What does the Rhine, after wiping the mud off his moustaches with a clean cambric hankerchief, and assuming the powdered face of an old warrior? he

Du *fameux* fort de Skink prend la route *connue!*

And Louis, what is he about?

> Louis, les animant du feu de son courage,
> Se plaint de sa grandeur...qui l'attache au rivage.

He had many such complaints to make against his grandeur: Cesar and Alexander had none. A Gascon ran away from a fortress about to be bombarded. He was intercepted and brought back; and, on his trial before a court-martial, said in his defence that he had wished to shew his courage in the plain. If this had been permitted, it would probably have been found to be of the same kind as that of Louis.

Turn to the eighth Epistle which is again addressed to the King. I pass over the intermediate, because it is reasonable to presume that if Boileau looks not well in a court-dress, he never looks well. In other cases indeed it would be unjust to confound the poet with the courtier; in him the courtier is the better part. I observe too that these Epistles are particularly celebrated by the Editor for "the suppleness and grace of the versification, and for the equableness, solidity, and fulness of the style."

> Et mes vers en ce style, ennuyeux, sans appas,
> Deshonorent ma plume et ne t' honorent pas.

If the verses were *ennuyeux et sans appas*, it

is evident enough that they dishonoured his pen; and what dishonoured his pen could not honour his prince. This thought, which Boileau has repeated so often, and so ill, is better expressed by several other of your poets, and shortly before by Malleville, in these words.

Mais je sçais quel effort demande cet ouvrage;
La grandeur du sujet me doit épouvanter;
Je trahirois sa gloire au lieu de l' augmenter,
Et ferois à son nom moins d'honneur que d'outrage.

DELILLE.

That sonnet of Malleville is very beautiful.

LANDOR.

Particularly in the conclusion: yet your critics preferred, to this and all others, one which displays Phillis and Aurora and Zephyr and Olympus, and in which a most polite apology is offered to the Sun, for the assertion that the brightness of Phillis was as much superior to his, as his was superior to that of the stars. They, who reason so profoundly on all things, seem to argue thus. If it requires more skill in a tailor to give a fashionable cut and fresh glossiness to an old court-dress, than to make a new one, it requires a better poet to refurbish a trite thought than to exhibit an original.

Dans les *nobles dourcurs* d'un sejour *plein de charmes*
Tu n'es pas moins heros qu'au milieu des alarmes.

In the second line, another equivoque! It is perfectly true that he was just as much a hero abed and asleep as in battle, but his heroism was chiefly displayed in these *nobles douceurs*. Pity that Boileau has written no ode on his marriage with a poor peasant girl whom he met while he was hunting. The Virgin Mary would perhaps have been bridesmaid, and Apollo would have presented the Gospel on which he swore. How many of your most glorious kings would, if they had been private men in any free country, have been condemned to the pillory and the galleys!

De ton trône agrandi portant seul tout le faix.

This is the favorite metaphor of your poet: he ought to have known that kings do not carry the burden of thrones, but that thrones carry theirs, and that therefore the metaphor here is not only inelegant, as usual, but imperfect and misapplied.

J' amasse de tes faits le pénible volume.

Again equivoque!... In turning over the leaves to arrive at the Art Poetique, my eye rests on this verse in the twelfth Epistle.

Qui n'eut jamais pour dieu que glâce...

A strange God enough! it is not to be wondered at if there is no other in his company: but there is: who?

..... et que froideur.

There are follies on which it would be a greater folly to remark. Who would have the courage to ask whether there is not coldness where there is ice? A Latin poet however has written almost as ill;

*Alpes*
*Frigidus aerias* atque *alta cacumina.*

Read the first lines in the Art Poetique.

C'est en vain qu'au Parnasse un *téméraire auteur*
Pense de l'art des vers atteindre la *hauteur*...

*Auteur* answers to *hauteur.* After this fashion an echo is the most accomplished of rhymers.

S'il ne sent point du ciel l'influence secrète.

In that case he is not *temeraire*, and the epithet is worse than useless.

Fuyez de ces auteurs l'abondance sterile,
Et ne vous chargez point d'un detail inutile.

The first verse forestals the second, which is flat, and the three following are still worse.

Ou le Temps qui s'enfuit...*une horloge à la main.*

He thinks it unreasonable that such an allegory should be censured. Now Time should be represented with no very modern inventions to designate him. I presume that M. Boileau means the *hourglass* by his *horloge* à la main; but although we often see in prints an allegorical figure of this description, no poet should think that a sufficient reason for adopting it, but rather (if a better were wanting) for its rejection. An *hourglass* in the hand of this mighty and most awful Power is hardly less ridiculous than a watch and seals.

> Soyez vif et pressé dans vos narrations,
> Soyez riche et *pompeux* dans vos descriptions.

I know not which to call the worse, the lines or the advice. But to recommend a man to be *rich* in any thing, is a hint that cannot always be taken.

> J' aime mieux Arioste et ses fables comiques
> Que ces auteurs toujours froids et melancholiques.

Really! This he intends as a *pis-aller*. Ariosto is a plagiary, the most so of all poets; Ariosto is negligent; his plan inartificial, defective, bad: but divide the Orlando into three parts and take the worst of them, and although it may contain a large portion of extremely vile poetry, it will contain more of good than the whole French language.

Mais aussi pardonnez, si, plein de ce beau zele,
De tous vos pas *fameux* observateur fidele,
Quelques fois du bon or je separe le faux.

What has *gold* to do, false or sterling, with *steps, zeal, and observation? Fameux*, I must remark, is a very favorite expression with him, and is a very unpoetical one. Poetry is the voice of Fame, and celebrates, not what is famous, but what deserves to be so. Of this Boileau is ignorant. He uses the same epithet at the beginning of the Lutrin.

Et toi, *fameux* heros, dont la sage entremise
De ce schisme naissant débarrassa l'Eglise,
Viens d'un regard heureux *animer mon projet*,
Et garde-toi de rire en si grave sujet.

The last advice destroys all facetiousness; to *animate a project* is nonsense.

Et de longs traits de *feu* lui sortent par les *yeux*.

This is just as euphonous as the verse,

Ses ecrits pleins de *feu* partout brillent aux *yeux*.

Another such is,

De ses ailes dans l'*air* secouant la pous*siere*.

Another no less so,

... Invisible en ce *lieu*
Je ne pourrai donc plus être vu que de *Dieu*.

And another,

Là Xenophon dans l'*air* heurte contre un la Serre.

In the translation of Sappho's ode, all is wretchedly bad after the first stanza.

Je sens *de veine en veine* une subtile flamme
Courir *par tout mon corps.*
Je ne *sçaurois trouver* de *langue*...ni de *voix.*
Un *nuage* con*fus* se repand sur ma *vie.*
Je n'entends *plus*...je tombe en de douces langueurs...

He had talked about *doux* transports two lines above.

Et pale, sans haleine, *interdite, éperdue*...

This is the very contrary to the manner of Sappho, as praised by Longinus, and nothing can be more diffuse, more tautological, more prosaic.

You must have remarked, M. l'Abbé, that I have frequently turned over several pages together, and that, *familiar*, as you may call me, of the *Holy Office*, I never have invested my meagre and hollow-eyed delinquent with colours of flame and images of devils. Ridicule has followed the vestiges of Truth, but never usurped her place. I have said nothing of the Odes, from an unwillingness to insult over their helpless fatuity. Only throw a glance over that on the taking of Namur.

Quelle *docte* et sainte ivresse
Aujourd'hui *me fait la loi?*

Violent absurdity!

Et par cent bouches *horribles*
L'airain sur ces monts *terribles.*—
*Dix mille vaillant Alcides.*—
C'est Jupiter en personne,
Ou c'est le vainqueur...de Mons!—
Saint-Omer, Besançon, Dole,
Ypres, Mastricht, et Cambrai!!!—
Accourez, Nassau, Baviere,

to do what?

*Considerer ...ces approches!!*—
Louis, à tout donnant l'âme,
Marcher, courir avec eux.

He might have marched with 'em, but he ran before 'em.

Son gouverneur, *qui se trouble.*—
De corps morts, de rocs, de *briques.*

Here, I observe, the editor says, le son de ces mots repond à ce qu'ils expriment. Pray, M. l'Abbé, which is the sound among them that resembles the dead bodies?

DELILLE.

The odes of Boileau, I confess, are inferior to the choruses of Racine in Athalie.

LANDOR.

Diffuse and feeble paraphrases from the Psalms! The best ode in your language is in the form of a sonnet by Gombaud.

La voix qui retentit &c.

The most admired verse of Racine,

Je crains Dieu, cher Abner, &c.

is borrowed almost literally from Godeau. *Cher Abner* favours the theft. The line preceding is useless, and shews, as innumerable other instances do, his custom of making the first *for* the second, and *after* it. He has profited much from the neglected poets of your country, and wants energy because he wants originality. You pause, M. l'Abbé.

DELILLE.

I cannot well believe, that if Boileau, to say nothing of Racine, was a poet so faulty as you represent him, he would have escaped the censure of such sound critics and elegant writers as Johnson and Warton.

LANDOR.

Add poets also; the former so powerful that he made the tempests sigh...

O'er the sad plains perpetual tempests sigh...

the latter, that he reduced the flames to the temperature of new milk.

How *burnt* their bosoms with *warm* patriot flame!

DELILLE.

Well! what is amiss?

LANDOR.

I perceive, my dear Abbé, that you slide easily on the corruptions of our language. In fashionable life we say, "I am very *warm*," never "I am very *hot:*" the expression is wrong. Warmth is temperate heat: we never say *red-warm*, but *red-hot;* never *burning-warm*, but *burning-hot;* we use a *warming-pan* for our beds, a *heater* of red-hot iron for our tea-urns. The epithet of *warm* applied to *flame* is worse than childish; for children speak as they feel; bad poets, from reminiscences and arrangements. Johnson had no feeling for poetry: Warton was often led astray by a feverish and weak enthusiasm.

DELILLE.

Johnson may not have been quite so learned as some, whose celebrity is less, for I believe that London is worse furnished with public libraries of easy access, than any city in Europe, not excepting Constantinople, and his private one, from his contracted circumstances, must have been scanty.

LANDOR.

He was studious; but neither his weak eyes, nor many other infirmities, on which very severe

mental disquietude worked incessantly, would allow him all the reading he coveted: besides he was both too poor and too wise to collect a large body of authors.

DELILLE.

Ignorant men are often more ambitious than the learned of copious libraries and curious books, as the blind are fonder of sunshine than the sighted. Surely the judgment of Johnson was correct, the style elegant.

LANDOR.

I have spoken of his judgment; it was alike in all things. In regard to elegance of style, it appears to me that a sentence of Johnson is like that article of dress which your nation has lately made peace with; divided into two parts, equal in length, breadth, and substance, with a protuberance before and behind. Warton's Essay on Pope is a cabinet of curiosities, in which are many trifles worth looking at, nothing to carry about or use.

DELILLE.

That Racine and Boileau were great borrowers is undeniable.

LANDOR.

And equally so that they sometimes paid only a small portion of the debt.

DELILLE.

Even your immortal Shakespear borrowed from others.

LANDOR.

Yet he was more original than the originals. He breathed upon dead bodies and brought them into life.

DELILLE.

I think however that I can trace Caliban, that wonderful creature, when I survey attentively the Cyclops of Euripides.

LANDOR.

He knew nothing of Euripides or his Cyclops. That poet, where he is irregular, is great; and he presents more shades and peculiarities of character, than all the other poets of antiquity put together. Yet in several scenes he appears to have written principally for the purpose of inculcating his political and moral axioms. Almost every character introduces them, and in almost every place. There is a regular barter of verse for verse; no credit is given for a proverb, however threadbare; the exchange is paid on the nail for the commodity. The dogmas, like *valets de place*, serve any master and run to any quarter. Even when new, they nevertheless are miserably flat and idle: how different from the striking sentences employed un-

sparingly by Pindar, which always come recommended by some simple and appropriate ornament, like images on days of festival in the temples. Virgil and Ovid have interspersed them throughout their works, with equal felicity. The dialogue of Euripides is sometimes dull and heavy; the construction of his fable infirm and inartificial; and if in the chorus he assumes another form and becomes a more elevated poet, he still is at a loss to make it serve the interests of the piece. Wearied by his dialectics, and again refreshed by his chorus, I cannot but exclaim

There be *two* Richards in the field today.

Aristophanes, who ridicules him in his Comedies, treats him disdainfully as the competitor of Sophocles, and speaks probably the sense of the Athenians in the meridian of their literature. If however he was not considered by them as the equal of Sophocles in dramatic power, still sensible men in all ages will respect him, and the more so, because they will fancy that they discover in him greater wisdom than others have discovered: for while many things in his tragedies are direct, and many proverbial, others are allusive and vague, occurring in various states of mind and temperatures of feeling. There is little of the theatrical

in his works; and his characters are more anxious to shew their understandings than their sufferings.

Euripides came down farther into common life than Sophocles, and he farther down than Æschylus: one would have expected the reverse. But the marvellous had carried Æschylus from the earth, and he filled with light the whole region in which he rested. The temperate greatness and pure eloquence of Pericles formed the moral constitution of Sophocles, who had exercised with him a principal magistracy in the republic; and the demon of Socrates, not always unimportunate, followed Euripides from the school to the theatre. The decencies of the boudoir were unknown to him: he would have shocked your chambermaids. Talthybius calls Polyxena a calf; her mother had done the same. Hercules, in Alcestis, is drunk.

DELILLE.

This is horrible, if true. Virgil (to venture nothing further about Racine), Virgil is greatly more judicious in his Dido.

LANDOR.

The passion of Dido is always true to Nature. Other women have called their lovers cruel: she calls Æneas so, not chiefly for betraying and deserting her, but for hazarding his life by encountering the tempests of a wintry sea.

"Even if it were not to foren lands and unknown habitations that you were hastening, even if Troy were yet in existence, and you were destined thither, would you choose a season like this? would you navigate a sea of which you are ignorant, under the stars of winter?"

I must repeat the lines, for the sake of proposing an improvement.

Quinetiam *hyberno* moliris sidere classem,
Et mediis properas aquilonibus ire per altum...
Crudelis! quod si non arva aliena domosque
Ignotas peteres, et Troja antiqua maneret,
Troja per *undosum* peteretur classibus æquor?

If *hybernum* were substituted for *undosum*, how incomparably more beautiful would the sentence be for this energetic repetition! Adjectives ending with *osus* express abundance and intensity to such a degree, that some learned men derive the termination from *odi*, the most potent and universal of feelings. If it be so, *famosus*, *jocosus*, *nemorosus*, *fabulosus*, *sabulosus*, &c. must have been a later brood.

*Undosum*, with all its force, would be far from an equivalent for *hybernum*, even if the latter held no fresh importance from apposition.

My admiration of the author of the Æneid, as you see, is not inferior to yours: but I doubt whether he has displayed *on the whole* such poetical powers as the author of Alcestis, who far

excels in variety and peculiarity of character all poets excepting Shakespear. He has invented, it is true, nothing so stupendous nor so awful as the Prometheus: but who has? The Satan of Milton himself sinks below it; for Satan, if he sometimes appears with the melancholy grandeur of a fallen Angel, and sometimes as the antagonist of Omnipotence, is often a thing to be thrown out of the way, among the rods and foolscaps of the nursery.

Still I wish that Virgil were a little more followed by our sweepers of the Haram; he might be, without diminution to their grace or dignity. He has been once in his riddle:

> Dic quibus in terris (et eris mihi magnus Apollo)
> Tres pateat *cœli* spatium non amplius ulnas.

The family of Cœlius, you know, was of Verona, and occasionally, it is probable, a visitant of Mantua. He upon whose tomb the invention of Menalcas was about to be exercised, is perhaps the same to whom, fifteen years before, Catullus addressed two of his lighter compositions. Now, Abbé,

> "Know you the land,
> Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit,
> And the voice of the nightingale never is mute?"

DELILLE.

Out upon it! I have it: a grocer's shop kept by one Nightingale. It cannot be otherwise; for olives and citrons in their natural state are ugly enough, but preserved and pickled they fairly beat almonds and raisins, figs, pistachios, and prunes.

LANDOR.

I have heard the paradox, that he intended no enigma.

DELILLE.

His enemies and rivals may assert it.

LANDOR.

They declare that he really means Turkey.

DELILLE.

Ha! ha! ha! spiteful rogues! If it were indeed not a man's house, but a region of the earth, it must be one where there is no peach, apricot, plum, raspberry, strawberry, cranberry, cherry, grape, currant, or crab; and I conceive that in such a situation there can hardly be citron or olive. Then the nightingale...He sings for a shorter season than any other bird. His song continues few weeks. There is something in it like the happiness of man before the Fall; vivid and exuberant, but melancholy from its solitude, and from the shades that we perceive are closing on it.

LANDOR.

You have earned your release from doubt. Whatever was the poet's first intention, he himself now declares that he has no concern in Nightingale's shop; that his idea is not borrowed from Virgil, and that the land, upon his faith,

Is the clime of the East, is the land of the Sun.

DELILLE.

Pray which? A pleasant release from doubt! a release like a push given by a jailor to his prisoner in the cell, with a cry of "*Get out, you rogue!*" as he turns the key upon him.

LANDOR.

We may observe also that really

"The voice of the nightingale never is mute."

DELILLE.

O yes surely. I am supported by Buffon.

LANDOR.

Songs may be mute, for songs may exist unsung; but voices exist only while they sound. In the same poem I find that,

"If ought his lips *essay'd* to groan,
The rushing billows choak'd the tone."

They need not take the trouble: I will answer

for lips doing no harm in the way of groaning, let them *essay* it as long as they list.

We have in England, at the present time, many poets far above what was formerly thought mediocrity; but our national taste begins to require excitement. Our poems must contain *strong things*. We call for essences, not for flowers. We run across from the old grove and soft meadow, into the ruined abbey, the Albanian fortress, and the Sultan's garden. We cut down our oaks and plant cypresses: we reprove our children for not calling a *rose* a *gul:* we kick the first shepherd we meet, and shake hands with the first cut-throat. We still excite tears; but we conjure them forth at the point of the dagger, and, if they come slower than we could wish, we bully and blaspheme.

DELILLE.

Nothing is easier than to catch the air of originality now blowing. Do not wonder that it pleases the generality. You and I perhaps have stopped, like the children and the servants, to look at a fine transparency on a staircase, while many, who called themselves professors, have passed a Raphael by and have never noticed it. Let us censure no one for being easily pleased, but let *us* do the best we can. Whenever I find a critic or satirist vehement against the writers of his age

and country, I attribute more of his inspiration to vanity than to malignity, much as I may observe of this. No good writer was ever long neglected; no great man overlooked by men equally great. Impatience is a proof of inferior strength, and a destroyer of what little there may be. Whether, think you, would Shakespear be amused or mortified, if he were sitting in the pit during the performance of his best tragedy, and heard no other exclamation from his next neighbour, than, *How beautifully those scenes are painted! what palaces, waterfalls, and rocks!*

LANDOR.

He, whose poems are worth all that have been composed from the Creation to the present hour, was so negligent or so secure of fame, as to preserve no copy of them. Homer and he, the one by necessity, the other by choice, confided to the hearts of men the treasures of their genius, which were, like conscience, unengraved words. A want of sedulity, at least in claiming the property of thoughts, is not among the deficiencies of our modern poets. Some traveller, a little while ago, was so witty as to call Venice Rome, not indeed the Rome of the Tiber, but the Rome of the sea. A poet, warm with keeping up the ball from gazette to gazette,

runs instantly to the printers, out of breath at so glorious an opportunity of perpetuating his fame, and declares to all Europe that he had called Venice Rome the year before. We now perceive, but too late for the laurel which they merited, what prodigious poets were your Marat and Bonaparte and Robespierre, with whom England one day was Tyre, another day Carthage, and Paris the Rome of the Seine.

We have wandered (and conversation would be tedious unless we occasionally did so) far from our subject: but I have not forgotten your Cyclops nor my Caliban. The character of the Cyclops is somewhat broad and general, but worthy of Euripides, and such as the greatest of Roman poets was incapable of conceiving: that of Caliban is peculiar and stands single; it is admirably imagined and equally well sustained. Another poet would have made him spiteful: Shakespear has made the infringement of his idleness the origin of his malice. He has also made him grateful: but then his gratitude is the return for an indulgence granted to his evil appetites. Those who by nature are grateful are often by nature vindictive: one of these properties is the sense of kindness, the other of unkindness. Religion and com-

fort require that the one should be cherished and that the other should be suppressed. The mere conception of the monster, without these qualities, without the sudden impressions which bring them vividly out, and the circumstances in which they are displayed, would not be, to considerate minds, so stupendous as it appeared to Warton, who little knew that there is a *nil admirari* as requisite to wisdom as to happiness.

No new fiction of a supernatural being exists in poetry. Hurd traced the genealogy of the Faeries, and fancied he made a discovery. The Sylphs have only another name. Witches and wizards and giants, apparently powerful agents, generally prove the imbecility of the author who has any thing to do with them. Dragons and demons awaken our childish fancies, some of which remain with us to the last. Dreams perhaps generated them, superstition presented them with names and attributes, and the poet brings them forth into action.

Take your Boileau. Some morning, when we are both of us quite at leisure, I will engage to make out the full hundred of puerilities in your grave, concise, elegant poet.

DELILLE.

There are excellences, my friend, in Boileau,

of which you cannot judge so correctly as a native can: for instance his versification.

LANDOR.

I would not creep into the secrets of a versification, upon which even you, M. Delille, can ring no changes; a machine which must be regularly wound up at every six syllables, and the construction of which is less artificial than that of a cuckoo-clock. The greater part of the heroic verses in your language may be read with more facility as anapestic than as iambic: there is not a syllable which may not become either short or long, however it usually be pronounced in conversation. The secret of conciseness I know and will communicate to you, so that you may attain it in the same manner and with the same facility as Boileau and Voltaire have done.

DELILLE.

Indeed it costs me infinite pains, and I almost suspect that I have sometimes failed.

LANDOR.

Well then, in future you may be master of it without any pains at all. Do what they did. Throw away the little links and hinges, the little cramps and dovetails, which lay upon the tables of Homer and of Virgil, which were adjusted, with equal nicety, by Cicero, Plato, and Demosthenes,

and were not overlooked by Bossuet and Pascal; then dock the tail of your commas, and behold a period.

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The French are firmly persuaded that all poetry, to be quite perfect, must be theirs or like it. I never conversed with one of them on the subject, who did not remark to me the obligations that Milton lay under to the Abbé Delille, and Shakspeare to Voltaire. Among the proofs of national vanity, not indeed equal to this, but still amusing enough, is the declaration of a grave writer on heraldry, that Raphael, Correggio, Leonardo, were incapable of painting a *fleur de lis*, and that none but a Frenchman by birth and *courage* could arrive at this summit of glory. His words are these:

J'estime qu'il est fort difficile, de bien faire et representer une fleur de lis *mignonnement troussée*, qui n'est peintre excellent et François *de nation et de courage:* car un Allemand, un Anglois, Espagnol, et Italien, n'en sçauront *venir à son honneur*, pour la bien proportionner.—Theatre d'honneur par Fauyn b. 2. c. 6. p. 185.

What is called a fleur de lis is in fact a spear-head. Chifflet wrote a treatise to prove that it was a *bee*. Joannes Ferrandus Aniciensis composed an Epinicion *pro* liliis. It is wonderful that painters so dexterous left any serious doubt whether what they had drawn so accurately were a flower, a spear-head, or a bee.

The good Abbé Delille entertained a sincere and high esteem for Monsieur Milton, but felt assured that Adam and Eve, Michael and Satan, could not be *mignonnement troussés* unless by the hand of a Parisian.

I should be sorry to have debased these *Conversations* by attention to a writer of so mean a cast as Boileau, if it might

not be useful to some of our popular critics, who never suspected that he was deficient in correctness of thought or expression, and who recommend him to the rising poets as a perfect model. A grub, if you hook it with dexterity, may catch a tunny. I throw mine upon the water, and leave it there.

# CONVERSATION XVI.

## THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER

AND

## CAPO D'ISTRIA.

# THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER

AND

# CAPO D'ISTRIA.

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CAPO D'ISTRIA.

Your Majesty now perceives all the benefits of the Holy-Alliance, and may remember my enumeration of them. Here is a fact for every word. The Holy-Allies cannot retract: they have admitted the principle: they have gone to work upon it. Austria possesses Italy: turbulence in neighbouring states may be repressed by invasion: there is not a monarch in Europe who denies it; not one who, whatever his fears, whatever his impudence may be, will oppose by action or word your long-meditated conquest of the Turkish empire.

ALEXANDER.

Capo d'Istria, you are a Greek, and would en-

gage me, prepared or unprepared, in war, for the defence of your native country.

CAPO D'ISTRIA.

Pardon me, my emperor! a Greek, it is true, I am, but you will find me not precipitate. The country of a statesman is the council-board of his prince. Let the pack bark in the kennel; but the shepherd-dog sleeps upon the wallet of his master.

ALEXANDER.

Come, give me your opinions, supposing war inevitable.

CAPO D'ISTRIA.

First then, if war is inevitable, I must publish in all the journals, on the testimony of merchants and bankers, that the differences are all accommodated. Fifteen thousand roubles will purchase you the principal gazetteers of England; one thousand those of France. The violence and pride of the Turkish character will indeed at last break off accommodation. Your good allies, at your earnest entreaty, will zealously interfere, to avoid the effusion of blood. You must request their advice how to avert this tremendous evil: you must weep over the decrepid fathers of families, the virtuous wives, the innocent children, the priests at the altar, with God in their mouths, weltering in their blood.

ALEXANDER.

How will France, England, Sweden, act upon this occasion?

CAPO D'ISTRIA.

Your Majesty must know that England is not in a condition to equip twenty thousand troops, and that the maintenance of such a force in the field would cost her more than a hundred thousand would cost Russia. Her last year's expenses in the contest with France were three times greater than all the expenses in all the campaigns of Peter the Great, and her march to Paris cost more than the building of Petersburgh. If her ministers had ever been men of calculation, as they should have been above all others from the habits and wants of their country, they would have avoided, as Walpole did, nearly all continental wars, and would have been contented to throw in a military and monied force, there only where its weight and its celerity must turn the balance.

ALEXANDER.

England is a brilliant performer, but bad timist.

CAPO D'ISTRIA.

Employments in England are properties, holden under certain families. Victories and conquests are secondary objects in her wars. Against the most consummate generals and the most enthu-

siastic troops in Europe, was despatched an inexperienced young prince, in whom the soldiers having no confidence, lost that which personal courage and national pride had implanted in themselves. Every new disgrace and disaster was a new reason for employing him. Expedition followed expedition, defeat followed defeat. On another occasion, republicans were taken out of the prisons, and brigaded with royalists, to fight for the king of France. They landed on the shores of their country, and slew their comrades. The city of Ferrol was to be attacked: neither the general nor any person under him knew its fortifications or its garrison. They saw the walls, and turned back; although the walls, on the side where they landed, were incapable of sustaining one discharge of artillery, and the garrison consisted of half an imperfect regiment; and although the city of Corunna, twenty miles distant, is commanded by the hills above it, in that direction, with walls even more feeble, and a garrison still more defective. Even the state of Antwerp was unexamined when an attack was to be made against it; nay, the English ministers had never heard that the island of Walcheren was unhealthy; by which ignorance they lost three thousand men.

The duke of Wellington himself, then untitled,

was superseded by two old generals, one after the other, at the moment when he had gained the most arduous of his victories. Nelson's brave heart was almost broken by persevering injustice and by proud neglect. He returned, like another Bellerophon, from unexpected and undesired success. Constantinople, which never contains fewer than forty thousand fighting men, was to be assailed by four thousand English; a number not sufficient to garrison the Seraglio, as your Majesty will find next October.

The ministers of England have squandered away the vast resources of their country among their supporters and dependents. The people are worne down with taxes, and hardly any thing short of an invasion could rouse them again to war. Besides, in times of discontent, it is dangerous to collect together so large an army as would be sufficient for any important purpose. The armies of Europe have not yet done all they are destined to do. The pertinacity of rulers, in making them the instruments of their ambition, has made them the arbiters of their fate. I would not speak so clearly, if I were not convinced that your Majesty will find full occupation for yours. Soldiers can never stand idle long together: they must turn into

citizens or into rebels. The Janisaries are only a *translation* of the Pretorian-guards.

ALEXANDER.

This seems true: and certain I am that England is not formidable to me just now.

CAPO D'ISTRIA.

Strike the blow and she will be less so. If she attack you let her attack you in possession of Turkey, not in writing a declaration of war. Threaten her with exclusion for twenty years from all your ports, if she moves.

ALEXANDER.

Her high spirit would not brook this language.

CAPO D'ISTRIA.

Her spirit must rise and fall with her condition. She has thrown her enemy upon the ground, but he will rise up first. In a time of the greatest plenty England removes a tax upon malt to the advantage of the brewer only. She will proceed in conciliating first one trade then another, until she sacrifices her *sinking-fund*, which ought to be sacred as the debt itself. It should never have been diminished: on the contrary it should have been augmented with whatever could have been curtailed from unnecessary and ostentatious offices.

ALEXANDER.

The interference of France is much to be apprehended: do not you think so, Capo d'Istria?

CAPO D'ISTRIA.

The good king of France is occupied in rocking to sleep the martial spirit of his children, as he calls them. He is the most clear-sighted man in his dominions; and had he been king of France five-and-thirty years ago, a reform, which might afterwards have been done away, would have prevented the revolution. The better part of his army is favorable to the cause of Greece; and the Spartan fife is pitched to the carmagnole. France wants colonies; England has too many. To England the most successful war is, on this account, more disastrous than to her defeated adversary: her conquests are the worst of evils to her colonies, and the destruction of another's commerce is a violent shock to hers. Cyprus, or Egypt preferably, would abundantly compensate France: either would accelerate the ruin of her rival, or at least increase her distresses. France will be persuaded by England to make some feeble remonstrances, but your Majesty will be informed of their import. Supposing, for nothing is impossible, that England should confide in the sincerity of her neighbour, it could produce no more

than an intemperance of language, the echoes of which boisterousness would sound but feebly on the shores of the Bosphorus.

ALEXANDER.

The spirit of your countrymen is not a spirit which I am at all disposed to encourage. I abhorr republicanism.

CAPO D'ISTRIA.

So your Majesty should. I feel no such abhorrence; but your Majesty shall find that all my speculations are lowered down to policy and duty. Leave the Greeks, my countrymen, to their own efforts for a time: every day will produce some new atrocity: mutual hatred will increase: mutual efforts will be made incessantly: both parties will exhaust themselves: but above all, the Turkish cavalry, the strength of the empire, will perish where it cannot act. Among the mountains and defiles it will want both exercise and provender. The Greeks, on becoming your subjects, under whatever form of government, whether absolute, mixt, (permit me an absurdity) or free, will be heartily glad to repose; and granting that their fibre still quivers, their strength will be unable to trouble or molest you. Propose to the king of Persia the invasion and possession of the best Turkish provinces, such as Bagdad

and Damascus; offer him either a great or a small force, whichever he chooses, of the infantry now quartered on his borders. This will prove your sincerity and ensure his success. You may *mediate* afterwards, and recover the whole, when the sons contend for the kingdom.

ALEXANDER.

But Austria will not assist and may oppose me.

CAPO D'ISTRIA.

God grant it! Her assistence, at the best, would only be in cutting up the prey; but her opposition would end in being cut up herself. The united kingdoms of Poland and Hungary! We must be fashionable, may it please your Majesty...*united* is the word of the day...unless we talk of marriages. The next year may produce that which must happen within the next twenty. The Adriatic is the boundary of the Eastern empire: the line above it is imaginary both to geographer and politician.

ALEXANDER.

I again acknowledge my apprehension of France, both from her perpetual favour towards Turkey, since the reign of Francis the first, and from her jealousy of any continental superior.

CAPO D'ISTRIA.

Apparently there is reason from these motives;

but others operate in a contrary direction. France will be very cautious of raising up a military chief. She remembers how much has been effected by one little worthy of her confidence, one great only by the littleness of his competitors. She remembers that her king was imposed upon her by the conqueror; and in vain will you demonstrate, as you easily may, that she has produced no man so temperate and wise within the memory of the living. The command of armies excites to ambition, and every officer expects promotion under a new dynasty. The king will avoid this by the preservation of peace, which is as necessary to him as war ever was to his predecessor.

Let us now take another view of the subject, and look beyond the king towards the army. Three hundred thousand French bodies lay exposed and stiff along your territory. Place the French army between a Russian and a Turkish, and say to it "*Frenchmen, here are those who slew your companions in arms, unprovoked aggressors; and here, on the other side, are those with whom hitherto you have lived in amity, the slaughterers and oppressors of the Greeks, those children of Leonidas and Epaminondas, the nation which founded Marseilles and Toulon, Ajaccio and Aleria, and left imprinted its finest features on*

*your character :*" they would consult their glory rather than their revenge, and their only hesitation would be, whether it allowed them to attack the weaker enemy. A glorious and great nation! A single spark fires and explodes them.

I must remark to your Majesty that Russia is the sole country in the world whose policy is immutable. Russia, like the star that shines above her, must remain for ever a guide to steer by. The policy of England has varied more frequently than that of any other nation on record, because in general a new administration deems it necessary to change the system of the former. The persons who now administer the affairs of that country, are persons of humble birth and humbler genius, but are maintained in their places by the timidity of the aristocracy, and by the contempt of all classes for the leaders of opposition. They will hazard nothing: they are far more prudent (weak as they are) than any past ministry for nearly half a century. As we have entered into the French national feeling, so will we now into the English, and I am confident of discovering that no hostility is to be apprehended by your Majesty, from the system of either cabinet or the spirit of either people.

The Englishman, in all respects the contrary of

his neighbour, is too great and too fierce a creature to be gregarious. He has little public honour, much private. His own heart makes large demands upon him, national glory none. The innermost regions of Hindostan, the wildest shores of the American Lakes, should have repeated the language of England. This is power; this is glory: Rome acquired it, and civilized the world by it; with how much scantier stores of intellect, how much less leisure, how much less intercourse, how much less philanthropy, how much less wealth! England would not assist the Greeks from any regard to their past glory, or with any prospective view to her own, but because they have suffered much and fought bravely. When the populace has pelted the king amidst his guards, a ceremony not uncommon, and some have been dismounted in the performance of their duty, they have always been hailed with loud cheers. Let a forener be attacked and defend himself in London, he raises up an army in his favour by the first effort of courage, and the brother of his antagonist clears the ground and demands *fair play* for him: such is the characteristic expression of this brave unbloody people. All, in other countries, crowd about the strong: he alone who prevails is in the right; he alone who wants no assistence is as-

sisted: the Englishman is the friend of the desolate and the defender of the oppressed. Hence his hatred and contempt of those who presume to an equality with him in other states, and the suddenness with which he breaks off all intercourse from the few whom he has admitted to his society. On these principles your Majesty will prepossess a most powerful and generous people in your favour: and although the national interest is concerned in maintaining the Turkish empire, the popular mind will aid you in its overthrow.

On no other resolution than the conquest of Turkey was it prudent in your Majesty to grant the dominion of Italy to Austria. The occupation of Naples does not require an army: four regiments and four hangmen could keep the whole peninsula in subjection. We wanted from all governments an acknowledgement of the dogma, that every ebullition of the public sentiment should be compressed. We obtained it; we saw it acted on: the first regiment of Austria that marched to Naples paved a road for your guards to Constantinople. Why should we break it up again? why abandon a line of policy, both ends of which are in our hands? Supposing, which is impossible, that any continental power should dare to oppose you, is there any that would be so powerful in

hostility as the Greeks in amity? Every male of that nation, from puberty to decrepitude, would take up arms; even her women, her bishops, her hospodars. But France, England, Austria, might confederate. Their confederation would act more feebly than the efforts of any one singly, and would ruin the finances of the only state amongst them which, at any time hereafter, might injure you long or materially. They could not hold together three months, no, nor one; the very first would serve for the seed-time of discord. France has a long account to settle with several of her neighbours: they know it, and will keep themselves shut closely up at home. Sweden and Prussia have one only guarantee for their integrity. Prussia may expect and obtain much, particularly if England moves a foot. Whatever your Majesty could take away from Sweden, is of no value to you, and would be taken only as a punishment for defection. She will therefor seek to cultivate the friendship of a potentate, interested more in preserving than in ruining her, alone capable of either, and alike capable of both. She sees the necessity of peace: for although her soldiers have been at all times the best that ever marched upon the earth, they never marched without some great object; and none such is now

before them. The Swedes are the most orderly and the most civilized people on the continent. Lovers as they are of their country, if they felt any unnecessary weight of taxes, they would change their habitations, well knowing that Swedes make Sweden, in whichever hemisphere. The finest countries in the world are still unoccupied. Avarice hath seized a few bays, a few river-banks, a few savannahs, a few mines, of America: the better and greater part remains unoccupied. Emigration has only begun: the colonists, at present there, are merely *avant-couriers* and explorers. What rational creature would live where the earth itself is taken away from him, by Nature, one-half of the year, where he sees nothing but snow and sky one-half of his lifetime, if the produce of his labour and the exercise of his will were not perfectly his own? Are light and warmth worth nothing? They cost much in every cold climate. There must also be a great expenditure, in more costly cloathing, in more copious food, in more spirituous beverage, in more profuse and wasteful hospitality. For solitude is intolerable even to the morose and contemplative without warmth or light. Every man then is severely taxed by the North itself: rewards, comforts, enjoyments,

privileges, should be proposed and invented to detain him; not impositions, not hardships. Sweden, whoever be her king, whatever her constitution, must avoid them, and must employ all imaginable means of procuring, from her own soil, her food, her raiment, and her luxuries. She should interdict every unnecessary importation. Her worst land should be proved to be capable of producing fruits, from which may be extracted strong and delicious and salutary liquors. Such is the beneficence of Providence, rarely well seconded, and often thwarted and intercepted, that the least fertile countries and the least genial climates, would mature vinous fruits, and administer a beverage more wholesome, and more grateful, than fifty-nine parts in sixty of the grape-wines, brewed in Italy and Spain. This is perhaps the first time, since the reign of Cyrus, that a minister of state ever talked on such matters. When I was twenty years younger I should have come forward with fear and blushes, if I had a word to say to my emperor on plums, cherries, currants, and raspberries. But a labourer may forget his weariness amidst the murmur of his hives, and a citizen be attached to his native soil by an apple-tree and a gooseberry-bush. Gar-

deners are never bad subjects. Sweden will encourage agriculture, plantation, and fishery. The latter is the most fertile of her possessions, and wants no garrisons or encampments. These occupations will deaden excitability to war, without injuring the moral and physical force by which, whenever it is necessary, it may be supported. But she appears to me farther removed from such a necessity than any other nation in the world, and your Majesty may calculate, for the remainder of your life, on her neutrality.

One argument answers all objections. If they all agreed that Naples should be invaded, when not a single act of violence had been committed, because the Neapolitans were turbulent, how greatly more forcible is the reason, when a more powerful nation is not only more turbulent, but when the same principles as those of the Neapolitans are in action on one side, and a fanaticism in hostility to Christianity on the other! Your Majesty is head of the Greek church: bishops and patriarchs have been massacred by the Mahometans. It becomes not your dignity to listen to any accommodation on such outrages. You might have pardoned (which would have been too much) the insult offered to your embassador; you might have yielded to the entreaties of your allies, in forbear-

ing from the same steps as had been taken by Austria; you might have permitted the aggrandisement of that powerful neighbour; but you cannot abandon the church of God, placed under your especial care and sole protection.

ALEXANDER.

Capo d'Istria! is it you who talk so?

CAPO D'ISTRIA.

No; it is your Majesty.

ALEXANDER.

My armies cannot stirr in this season of the year; the Turks can march all winter.

CAPO D'ISTRIA.

Let them: we shall have occupation enough in preparing stores and shewing our sincerity. We shall be compelled into the war when we are ready. Wait only until after the Ramadan: the fierceness of the Turks will subside by fasting, and differences will arise between the European and Asiatic troops.

ALEXANDER.

We cannot speculate on the latter case, and our soldiers also will fast...

CAPO D'ISTRIA.

Or not; as your Majesty pleases. The Christian is the only religion, old or new, in which individuals and nations can dispense, by another's per-

mission, with their bounden duties; such are fasts, curtesies, crosses, genuflexions, processions, and other bodily functions.

ALEXANDER.

This would be a religious war; and Islamism may send into the field half a million of combatants.

CAPO D'ISTRIA.

Then is victory ours. Devastated provinces cannot furnish provisions to one-third of the number in one body, and they would fight not for articles of faith, but for articles of food, Turk against Turk, not against Greek and Russian. He who has the best commissariate has the strongest army. Your Majesty can bring into the field as large a force as the enemy, a force better disciplined and better supplied: hence the main body will be more numerous; and with the main body the business of the war will be effected. March directly for Constantinople. All great empires have been lost and gained by one battle, your own excepted. The conquest of the Ottoman will be atchieved by one: twenty would not win Rhodes. He who ruined the Persians at Marathon was repulsed from the little rock of Paros. I beg your Majesty's pardon for such an offence against the dignity of diplomacy, as a quotation of ancient

history, at a time when the world abounds with young *attachés à la legation*, all braver than Miltiades, all more eloquent than Herodotus, all more virtuous than Aristides, and all more wise than Solon. Your Majesty smiles. I have heard their patrons swear it upon their honour.

ALEXANDER.

The very thing on which such an oath should be sworne; the altar is worthy of the offering, and the offering of the altar.

CAPO D'ISTRIA.

A great encounter within sight of Constantinople throws the most distant dominions of the sultan into your hands: Selim, the Prophet, and Fate bend before you. Precedents are good for all, even for Russia: but Russia has great advantages, which other powers have never had, and never will have. Remember, now and for ever, that she alone can play deep at every table and stake nothing.

# CONVERSATION XVII.

## KOSCIUSKO

AND

## PONIATOWSKI.

# KOSCIUSKO

AND

# PONIATOWSKI.

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PONIATOWSKI.

A SHORT and hasty letter, brought by my courier, will have expressed to you, general, with what pleasure I obtained leave of absence for ten days, that I might present you my affectionate homage here in Switzerland.

KOSCIUSKO.

No courier can have arrived, sir; for we hear the children at play in the street, and they would have been earnest to discover what sort of creature is a courier.

PONIATOWSKI.

I myself am no bad specimen of one: I have traversed three kingdoms in five days; such a power of attraction has Kosciusko on Poniatowski.

KOSCIUSKO.

Poniatowski! my brave countryman, I embrace you heartily. Sit down, rest yourself...not upon that chair...the rushes are cut through in the middle...the boys and girls come in, when I am reading in the window or working in the garden, and play their old captain these tricks.

PONIATOWSKI.

I must embrace you again, my general! Always the same kind, tender heart, the same simplicity and modesty! There is little of poetry or of ingenuity in the idea that your nativity was between the Lion and the Virgin. O with what enthusiasm would our legions follow you! why not return amongst us and command us?

KOSCIUSKO.

Where is Poland?

PONIATOWSKI.

She rises from her ashes with new splendour: in every battle she performs the most distinguished part...do you sigh at hearing it!

KOSCIUSKO.

Poniatowski! her blood flows for strangers, and her heroism is but an interlude in the drama of Ambition. She is intoxicated from the cup of Glory to be dismembered with the less feeling of her loss. When she recovers her senses, in vain

will she look around for compassion or for gratitude. Beyond a doubt I am a feeble and visionary politician; nevertheless I will venture to express my opinion, that gratitude, although it never has been admitted among the political virtues, is one; that whatever is good in morals is also good in politics; and that, by introducing it opportunely and dexterously, the gravest of old politicians might occasionally be disconcerted. Do not let us be alarmed at the novelty: many have presumed to recommend the observance of Justice; and Gratitude is nothing more than Justice in a fit of generosity, and permitting a Love or a Genius to carry off her scales.

PONIATOWSKI.

We live in an age when no experiments of this kind are tried, and when all others are exhausted.

KOSCIUSKO.

True, we see nothing in battle but brute force, nothing in peace but unblushing perfidy. War, which gave its name to strategems, would recall them, and cannot; they are shut up within the cabinet and counter, where they never should have entered, and the wisest of them are such as would disgrace the talents of a ringdropper.

If the person, to whom Fortune seems to have given the disposal of mankind, had known any-

thing of our national character, he would have augmented the dominions of Poland, instead of diminishing them: if he had known as much of policy as a peasant or a professor, he would have united with it Royal Prussia and Hungary, and its southern boundaries would have been the Danube and the Dnieper. Every German province, excepting a few I am about to mention, would have been erected into a kingdom, under the most powerful or the most popular of its princes, its nobles, its magistrates; representatives would have been elected, standing armies would have been abolished. Thus the existence of the governors and the prosperity of the governed would have been his work, and that work would have been indestructible. The erection of twenty kings in twenty minutes would have abundantly gratified his vanity...a consideration not unimportant when we discourse upon crowned heads, and particularly upon heads crowned recently, or indeed upon heads of any kind subject to the vortices of power. The Scandinavian Peninsula should have been strengthened by the junction of Denmark, Mecklenburgh, and Pomerania, forming a barrier against the maritime force of England, and (united by confederacy with Poland) against the systematic and unsuspected march of Muscovite aggression.

No German kingdom should have contained much more than one million of inhabitants. It was his business to lessen not only the kingly authority but the kingly name.

History has given us no example of a man whose errors have been so manifold and so destructive. I confess that I have been mistaken in foretelling his downfall: I calculated from observations on mankind in ages less effete. I could not calculate the forces that resisted him, for I knew only the military and financial force, and this but numerically; I knew not by whom and where and to what specific object it was to be applied. Fortunate! to spring up in a season of rankness and rottenness, when every principle of vitality had been extinguished in the state, either by the *malaria* of despotism, or by the tempests of democracy; when all who came against him from without were weaker in judgment than himself, and when the wildest temerity was equally sure of success as the most prudent combinations and the best measured conduct. No general, I believe, in the lowest degree versed in war, has been consulted by the principal of the belligerents; this we know, persons the least practised in it have been employed as commanders in chief. The good people of England is persuaded that to open a campaign is as

easy as to open an oyster, and to finish it is a thing to be done as quickly as to swallow one.

PONIATOWSKI.

England will alter her system from one of these two causes. Either (at the end of twenty years perhaps) all the families of her aristocracy will be sufficiently enriched, which is the prime motive in all her undertakings, or a serious and earnest effort will be made against increasing danger, and some general of capacity will at last be appointed to satisfy the clamours of the people, and to keep the government, or rather the governors, unshaken. I have heard however that Pichegru and Dumourier have sometimes been consulted by that cabinet.

KOSCIUSKO.

The name of the latter I remember in old gazettes; and I will readily believe that he may have given his advice. Pichegru had no influence there; he received no marks of confidence, few of courtesy. His wisdom, his modesty, his taciturnity, his disdain of puppets in power, beating each other head against head and chuckling each other's language when uppermost, a disdain his stern countenance ill concealed, would be my proofs and vouchers, if I had not also his own declaration. He was incomparably the best general in Europe,

and could not often have failed in what he thought expedient. He had however two great defects, either of which might have brought his loyalty into suspicion: he wore no other powder in his hair than what it collected on a march; and he put on boots, when he should have put on buckles.

PONIATOWSKI.

I have heard young Englishmen of distinction say, that they could hardly suppose him to be a Frenchman, unless from his ugliness: that he spoke slowly, contradicted no one, interrupted no one, delivered no opinion of his own unasked, nor indeed at all when he could adduce another's, never aimed at a witticism, never smiled at a misfortune, an awkwardness, or a sneer, never sang, never danced, never spat upon the carpet, or in the presence of a lady, bowed ungracefully and gravely, and had been seen to blush.

KOSCIUSKO.

They might have added, that he refused to execute the decree of the Convention, when no quarter was to be given them; that he hazarded his life for his humanity; and that he invaded and conquered the richest country in the world, and took not away from it one grain of gold. If he had been facetious and eloquent he would have

been almost a Phocion: no other man in Europe can be weighed against his scabbard.

PONIATOWSKI.

The French accuse him of betraying the Republic.

KOSCIUSKO.

He saw one thing clearly, and firmly believed another. He saw that the French character could retain no stamp of republicanism; and he believed that the Bourbons would be chastened by adversity. As the Republic must die by a natural death or a violent one, he preferred the former; and he desired that the supreme magistracy should return to that family which had the most orderly and peaceable for its partisans. He knew enough of the Bourbons, to be certain that they never would recompense his services, and enough of human nature in its most exalted state, to feel that a man great as himself could alone be his rewarder. We hear many complaints of princes and of fortune; but believe me, Poniatowski, there never was a good or generous action that met with much ingratitude.

PONIATOWSKI.

Is it possible you can say so! you, to whom no statues are erected, no hymns are sung in public

processions; you, who have no country... and you smile upon such injuries and such losses.

KOSCIUSKO.

My friend, I have lost nothing: I have received no injury: I am in the midst of our country day and night. Absence is not of matter: the body does not make it. Absence quickens our love and elevates our affections. Absence is the invisible and incorporeal mother of ideal beauty. Were I in Poland, how many things are there which would disturb and perhaps exasperate me! Here I can think of her as of some departed soul, not yet indeed cloathed in light, nor exempted from sorrowfulness, but divested of passion, removed from tumult, and inviting to contemplation. She is the dearer to me because she reminds me that I have performed my duty towards her... Permitt me to go on... I said that a good or generous action never met with much ingratitude. I do not deny that ingratitude may be very general; but even if we experience it from all quarters, there is still no evidence of its weight or its intensity. We bear upon our heads an immense column of air, but the nature of things has rendered us insensible of it altogether: have we not also a strength and a support against what is equally external, the breath of worthless men?

Very far is that from being much or great, which a single movement of self-esteem tosses up and scatters. Slaves make out of barbarians a king or emperor; the clumsiest hand can fashion such misshapen images; but the high and discerning spirit spreads out its wings from precipices, raises itself up slowly by great efforts, acquires ease, velocity, and might, by elevation, and suns itself in the smiles of its Creator.

# CONVERSATION XVIII.

## MIDDLETON

AND

## MAGLIABECHI.

# MIDDLETON

AND

# MAGLIABECHI.

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MAGLIABECHI.

THE pleasure I have enjoyed in your conversation, sir, induces me to render you such a service, as never yet was rendered by an Italian to a stranger.

MIDDLETON.

You have already rendered me several such, M. Magliabechi, nor indeed can any man of letters converse an hour with you and not carry home with him some signal benefit.

MAGLIABECHI.

Your life is in danger, M. Middleton.

MIDDLETON.

How! impossible! I offend no one, in public or in private: I converse with you only: I avoid all others, and above all, the busybodies of litera-

ture and politics. I court no lady: I never go to the palace: I enjoy no favours: I solicit no distinctions: I am neither poet nor painter *. Surely

* Whatever is said on the envy of poets and painters, who appear to be more subject to this distemper than any other description of men, must owe its merit to the manner in which it is expressed, and to the occasion on which it is brought forward. The same idea is found in the lines below.

Si sint Invidiæ strigosiora
(Ut sunt) ubera pelle viperinâ,
Si sint flaccidiora quàm vel utres
Queis tu admoveris os, amice Lotti,
Salsâ halece meridieque siccum,
Quid mirum? assiduè trahenda præbet
Tot pictoribus atque tot poetis.

The verses were addressed to the rev. Dr. Lotti of Lizzano, on the confines of the Modenese. This gentleman, the reputed son of the emperor P. Leopold, to whom (if I may judge from the coins) he bore a perfect resemblance, was the most learned and courteous man I have ever conversed with in Tuscany. He was rather fond of wine; but with decorum. I spent one of the happiest days of my life in his society, and was about to repeat my visit the following summer, when I heard that my quiet, inoffensive, beneficent friend had been stoned to death by a parishioner. No inquiry was instituted by government: he had nothing but erudition and virtue to recommend him, and the tears and blessings of the poor. I asked how so unmerited a calamity could have befallen so warm-hearted a creature, and in the decline of life: the reply was, *Chi sa? forse uno sbaglio.* "Who knows? perhaps it was done by mistake." What a virtuous and happy people must that be, to which such a loss is imperceptible! I saw him but three times, and lament it, more than I think it right to express, at the distance of nearly two years. Rest thee with God, kind, gentle, generous Lotti!

then I, if any one, should be exempt from malignity and revenge.

MAGLIABECHI.

To remove suspense, I must inform you that your letters are opened and your writings read by the Police. The servant whom you dismissed for robbing you, has denounced you.

MIDDLETON.

Was it not enough for him to be permitted to plunder me with impunity? does he expect a reward for this villainy? will his word or his oath be taken?

MAGLIABECHI.

Gently, M. Middleton. He expects no reward: he received it when he was allowed to rob you. He came recommended to you as an honest servant by several noble families. He robbed them all, and a portion of what he stole was restored to them by the police, on condition that they should render to the Government a mutual service when called upon.

MIDDLETON.

Incredible baseness! can you smile upon it, M. Magliabechi! can you have any communication with these wretches, these nobles, as you call them, this servant, this police!

MAGLIABECHI.

My opinion was demanded by my superiors,

upon some remarks of yours on the religion of our country.

MIDDLETON.

I protest, sir, I copied them in great measure from the Latin work of a learned German.

MAGLIABECHI.

True: I know the book: it is entitled *Facetiæ Facetiarum.* There is some wit and some truth in it; but the better wit is, the more dangerous is it; and Truth, like the Sun, coming down upon us too directly, may give us a brain-fever.

In this country, M. Middleton, we have *jalousies* not only to our windows but to our breasts: we admit but little light to either, and we live the more comfortably for so doing. If we changed this custom, we must change almost every other, all the parts of our polity having been gradually drawn closer and closer, until at last they form an inseparable mass, of religion, laws, and usages. We condemn as a dangerous error the doctrine of Galileo, that the earth moves about the sun; but we condemn rather the danger than the error of asserting it...

MIDDLETON.

Pardon my interruption. When I see the doctors of your church insisting on a demonstrable falsehood, have I not reason to believe that they

would maintain others less demonstrable, and more profitable?

MAGLIABECHI.

Among your other works I find a manuscript on the inefficacy of prayer. I defended you to my superiors by shewing that Cicero had asserted things incredible to himself merely for the sake of argument, and had probably written them before he had fixed in his mind the personages to whom they should be attributed in his dialogues; that, in short, they were brought forward for no other purpose than discussion and explosion. This impiety was forgiven. But every man in Italy has a favorite saint, for whose honour he deems it meritorious to draw (I had almost said the sword) the stiletto.

MIDDLETON.

It would be safer to attempt dragging God from his throne, than to splitt a spangle on their petticoats, or to puff a grain of powder from their perukes. This I know. Nothing in my writings is intended to wound the jealousy of the Italians. Truth, like the juice of the poppy, in small quantities calms men, in larger heats and irritates them, and is attended by fatal consequences in its excess. For which reason, with plain ground before me, I would not expatiate largely, and often

made an argument, that offered itself, give way altogether and leave room for inferences. My treatise on prayer was not to be published in my lifetime.

MAGLIABECHI.

And why at any time? Is not the mind exalted by prayer, the heart purified, are not our affections chastened, our desires moderated, our enjoyments enlarged by this intercourse with the Deity? and are not men the better, as certainly they are the happier, for a belief that he interferes in their concerns? They are persuaded that there is something conditional between them, and that, if they labour under the commission of crimes, their voice will be inaudible as the voice of one under the nightmair.

MIDDLETON.

I wished to demonstrate that we often treat God in the same manner as we should treat some doating or some passionate old man: we feign, we flatter, we sing, we cry, we gesticulate.

MAGLIABECHI.

Worship him in your own manner, according to the sense he has given you, and let those who cannot exercise that sense, rely upon those who can. Be convinced, M. Middleton, that you never will supplant the received ideas of God: be no

less convinced that the sum of all your labours in this field will be, to leave the ground loose beneath you, and that he who comes after you will sink. In sickness, in our last particularly, we all are poor wretches: we are nearly all laid on a level by it: the dry rot of the mind supervenes, and loosens whatever was fixt in it except religion. Would you be so inhumane as to tell any friend in this condition, not to be comforted? so inhumane as to prove that the crucifix, which his wandering eye finds at last its resting-place, is of the very same material as his bedpost?

MIDDLETON.

Far be it from my wishes and from my thoughts, to unhinge those portals through which we must enter to the performance of our social duties: but I am sensible of no irreligion, I acknowledge no sorrow or regret, in having attempted to demonstrate that God is totally and far removed from our passions and infirmities. I would inculcate entire resignation to the divine decrees, acquiescence in the divine wisdom, confidence in the divine benevolence. There is something of frail humanity, something of its very decrepitude, in our ideas of God: we are foolish and ignorant in the same manner, and almost to the same degree, as those painters are, who append a grey beard to

his chin, draw wrinkles across his brow, and cover him with a gaudy and flowing mantle. I admitt the benefit and the necessity of enuring the mind to repose upon the contemplation of the divine perfections, and to purify itself by looking upwards to the purity of heaven: but I see neither wisdom nor piety in the prayers of your Capuchins and their besotted hearers to God and his Saints for a Parmesan cheese, or a new pair of breeches.

MAGLIABECHI.

Prayer, at all times serviceable, may apparently on some occasions be misapplied. Father Onesimo Sozzifante, on his return from England, presented to me a singular illustration of my remark. He had resided some years in London, as chaplain to the Sardinian envoy: in the firstfloor of his lodginghouse dwelt Mr. Harbottle, a young clergyman, learned, of elegant manners, yet fond of foxhunting. Inconsistencies like these are found nowhere but in your country: in others, those who have enough for one side of the character, have not enough for the opposite: you in general are sufficiently wellstored to squander much of your intellectual property, to neglect much, and to retain much.

Mutual civilities had always passed between the two ecclesiastics, and father Onesimo had received

many invitations to dinner from his neighbour. After the first, he had declined them, deeming the songs and disputations in a slight degree indecorous. The party at this was clerical: and, although he represented it as more turbulent in its conclusion than ours are, and although there were many warm disputants, chiefly on jockies or leaders in parliament, he assured me he was much edified and pleased, when, at the removal of the dishes, all drank devoutly to old friendships. "*I thought of you,*" said he, "*my dear Magliabechi, for every one had then before his eyes the complacent guide of his youth. Mine shed a few tears; at which my friends glanced one upon another and smiled; for from an Englishman not Shakspear, no, nor even the crucifix, can extort a tear.*"

Onesimo was at breakfast with Mr. Harbottle, when an Italian ran breathless into the room, kissed the father's hand, and begged him to come instantly and attend a dying man. "*We will go together,*" said Mr. Harbottle. Following their informant, they passed through several lanes and allies, and at last mounted the stairs of a garret, in which was lying a youth, stabbed the night before by a Livornese, about one of those women who excite the most quarrels and deserve the

fewest. "*Leave me for a moment,*" said father Sozzifante, "*I must hear his confession.*" Hardly had he spoken, when out came all whom kindness or piety or curiosity had collected, and *he is in paradise!* was the exclamation. Mr. Harbottle then entered, and was surprised to hear the worthy confessor ask of the dead man whether he forgave his enemy, and answer in another tone, "*Yes, father, from my heart I pardon him.*" On returning, he remarked that it appeared strange to him. "*Sir,*" answered Onesimo, "*the catholic church enjoins forgiveness of injuries.*" "*All churches enjoin the same,*" replied Mr. Harbottle. "*He was unable to speak for himself,*" said the father, "*and therefor I answered for him like a christian.*"

Mr. Harbottle, as became him, was silent. On their return homeward they passed by a place which, if I remember, is called New-gate, a gate, above which, it appears, criminals are hanged. At that very hour the cord was around the neck of a wretch who was repeating the Lord's prayer: the first words they heard were, "*Give us this day our daily bread.*" The father looked at his companion with awe, spreading his fingers on his sleeve, and pressing it until he turned his face towards him. They both pushed on; but,

such was the crowd, they could not pass the suppliant before he had uttered, "*And lead us not into temptation.*" The good father stepped before Mr. Harbottle, and, lifting his hands above his ears, would have said something; but his companion cried smartly, "*I have seals to my watch, Signor Sozzifante, and there is never a fellow hanged but he makes twenty fit for it: pray walk on.*" Fairly out of the crowd, "Poor sinful soul!" said the father, "ere this time thou art in purgatory! *thy* daily bread! alas, thou hast eaten the last mouthful! *thy* temptation! thou wilt find but few there, I warrant thee, my son! Even these divine words, Mr. Harbottle, may come a little out of season, you perceive."

Mr. Harbottle went home dissatisfied: in about an hour a friend of his from Oxford called on him: as the weather was warm, the door standing ajar, Sozzifante heard him repeat the history of their adventure, and add; "I will be damned if in my firm persuasion the fellow is not a Jesuit: I never should have thought it: he humbugged me about the dead man, and perhaps got another hanged to quiz me. Would you believe it? he has been three good years in getting up this farce, the first I have ever caught him, and the last he shall ever catch me at."

Father Onesimo related to me these occur-

rences, without a word of reproach or an accent of illhumour. "The English is a strong language," said he placidly, "and the people, the least deceivers in the world, are naturally the most indignant at a suspicion of deceit. Mr. Harbottle, who, I dare to say, is ripened ere this time into an exemplary and holy man, was then rather fitter for society than for the church. Do you know," said he in my ear, although we were alone, "I have seen him pay his laundress (and there was nothing between them) five shillings for one week only! a sum that serves any cardinal the whole winter-quarter...in April and May indeed, from one thing or other, linen wants washing oftener."

M. Middleton, I have proved my candour, I trust, and my freedom from superstition: but he that seeks will find: and perhaps he that in obstinacy closeth his eyes long together, will open them just at the moment when he shall meet what he avoided.

I will inform you of some facts I know, shewing the efficacy of prayer to saints.

Giacomo Pastrani of Genoa, a citizen not abundant in the gifts of fortune, had however in his possession two most valuable and extremely rare things, a virtuous wife and a picture of his patron,

saint Giacomo, by Leonardo. The wife had long been ill: her malady was expensive: their substance was diminishing; still no offers had tempted him, although many had been made, to sell the picture. At last, he refused to alienate it indeed, but in favour of a worthy priest, and only as the price of orations to the Virgin. "*Who knows how many it may require?*" said the holy man; "*and it is difficult to make an oration which the Virgin has not heard before: perhaps fifty will hardly do. Now fifty crowns would be little for such protection.*" The invalide, who heard the conversation, wept aloud. "*Take it, take it,*" said the husband, and wept too, lifting it from the nail, and kissing for the last time the glass that covered it. The priest made a genuflexion, and did the same. His orations prevailed; the wife recovered. The priest, hearing that the picture was very valuable, although the master was yet uncertain, and that in Genoa there was no artist who could clean it, waited for that operation until he went to Milan. Here it was ascertained to be the work of Leonardo, and a dealer gave him four thousand crowns for it. He returned in high glee at what had happened, and communicated it to all his acquaintance. The recovered woman, on hearing it, fell sick again immediately, and died. Wishing to forget the sacrifice of her

picture, she had prayed no more to saint Giacomo; and the Virgin, we may presume, on that powerful saint's intercession, had abandoned her.

Awful fact! M. Middleton. Now mark another perhaps more so.

Angiolina Cecci, on the day before her nuptials, took the sacrament most devoutly, and implored of our Florentine saint, Maria Bagnesi, to whose family she was related, her intervention for three blessings: that she might have one child only; that the *cavaliere servente*, agreed on equally by her father and her husband, might be faithful to her; and lastly that, having beautiful hair, it never might turn grey. Now mark me. Assured of success to her suit, by a smile, as she believed, on the countenance of the saint, she neglected her prayers and diminished her alms henceforward. The moneybox, which is shaken during the celebration of mass, to recompense the priest for the performance of that holy ceremony, was shaken aloud before her day after day, and never drew a *crazia* from her pocket. She turned away her face from it, even when the collection was made to defray the arrears for the beatification of Bagnesi. Nine months after her marriage she was delivered of a female infant. I am afraid she expressed some discontent at the dispensations of Providence, for within an hour afterwards she

brought forth another of the same sex. She became furious, desperate, sent the babes, without seeing them, into the country, as indeed our ladies very often do; and spake slightingly and maliciously of Saint Maria Bagnesi. The consequence was a puerperal fever, which continued several weeks, and was removed at great expense to her family, in masses, waxcandles, and processions. Pictures of the Virgin, wherever they were found by experience to be of more peculiar and more speedy efficacy, were hired at heavy charges from the convents: the Cordeliers, to punish her pride and obstinacy, would not carry theirs to the house for less than forty scudi.

She recovered; admitted her friends to converse with her; raised herself upon her pillow, and accepted some faint consolation. At last it was agreed by her physicians that she might dress herself and eat brains and liver. Probably she was ungrateful for a benefit so signal and unexpected; since no sooner did her *cameriera* comb her hair than off it came by the handful. She then perceived her error, but, instead of repairing it, abandoned herself to anguish and lamentation. Her *cavaliere servente*, finding her bald, meagre, and eyesore, renewed his addresses to the mother. The husband, with two daughters to provide for,

the only two ever reared out of the many entrusted to those peasants, counted over again and again the dowery, shook his head, sighed piteously, and, hanging on the image of Bagnesi a silver heart of five ounces, which, knowing it to have been stolen, he bought at a cheap rate of a Jew upon the bridge, calculated that the least of impending evils was, to purchase an additional bed just large enough for one.

You ponder, M. Middleton: you appear astonished at these visitations: you know my sincerity: you fully credit me: I cannot doubt a moment of your conviction: I perceive it marked strongly on your countenance.

MIDDLETON.

Indeed, M. Magliabechi, I now discover the validity of prayer to saints, and the danger of neglecting them. Recommend me in yours to Saint Maria Bagnesi.

# ADDITIONAL NOTES.

## NOTE TO CONVERSATION I. PAGE 12.

"*Such as no Emperor of Germany can refuse.*"—*Emperor* is the title usually given to the heads of the Germanic league: but in fact there never was an *emperor of Germany*. Adrien Valois, in a letter to Albert Portner, writes thus. Legi Conringii librum *de finibus Imperii Germanici*, cujus libri titulum jure quis arguat...nullum enim usquam imperium Germanicum fuit unquam, nullum est hodieque; nec imperator, etiamsi in Germaniâ sedem habeat, Germanorum imperator est, sed, ut ipse se more majorum appellat, rex Germaniæ et Romanorum imperator. Here we see the *rex* is before the *imperator:* if in the patents of Charles the fifth it is otherwise, the reason is that the title of king is applied to the dominion of several states which his ancestors had acquired more recently. Valois proceeds, Si tamen Romanorum imperator vocari debet qui urbi Romæ non imperat, et ab episcopo ecclesiæ Romanæ, Romæ, ac senatûs populique Romani sententiâ, dudum desiit consecrari. This letter is not printed among the works of Valois or his brother, but is of unquestionable authenticity, and may be found entire in the Amœnitates Literariæ of Schelhorn, Tom. V. p. 542. Valois was a good scholar, but he errs in his latinity when he objects to the expression *imperium Germanicum*, for that expression would be correct whether Germany were governed by a king, an emperor, an aristocracy, or a democracy. The Roman state was just as

much *imperium Romanum* under the consuls and tribunes as under Tiberius or Caligula. The justice of the remark made by Valois is proved by the patents of Charles V, which always began, Carolus V, divinâ favente clementiâ, Romanorum Imperator Augustus, *ac rex Germaniæ*, Hispaniarum, utriusque Siciliæ, Hierusalem, Hungariæ, &c." The present emperor of Austria formally laid down a title which never belonged to him: he and all his ministers were ignorant of this, and I doubt whether there was any statesman in all Europe who knew it.

### NOTE TO CONVERSATION II. PAGE 17.

"*Bowls and ninepins for their Sunday-evening.*"—Amusements were long permitted the English on Sunday evenings, nor were they restricted until the puritans gained the ascendency. Even labour on certain occasions, was not only allowed but enjoined. By an order of Edward VI the farmer was encouraged to harvest upon the Sunday, and in the same article it is called a great offence to God to be scrupulous and superstitious in foregoing such occupations.

### NOTE TO CONVERSATION VIII. PAGE 105.

"*That a kingdom shall have two* chief *magistrates.*"—Casaubon must here be supposed to mean, two magistrates each of whom pretended to power independently of the other. For in Sparta were two kings; and in Japan was a kind of pope, reported, by those who are interested in the parallel, to possess an equal authority with the emperor. Unquestionably, where any such magistrate exists, a short time is requisite for his growth into inordinate power: wherever there is an hierarchy there will be usurpation. The Japanese pope, or dairo, is reduced to order, and his chief legitimate privileges are, the keeping of twelve wives, with as many concubines as

are necessary for the prosperity of the state and the interests of religion. The number of these, no doubt, would be diminished, if no serious danger were to be apprehended from the example of innovation, particularly in an age so prone to immorality and infidelity, and among a people of so little *unction* and *recueillement*.

END OF VOL. I.

## ERRATA.

Page 4, line 5, *for* result, *read* insult.
—— 52, line 4, *for* sugarbakers, *read* sugarbakers' wives.
—— 108, Note line 16, *for* are, *read* is.
—— 176, line 8, *for* qui dveri, *read* quid veri.
—— 221, line 10, *for* serviente, *read* servente.
—— 256, line 15, *for* empoisonées, *read* empoisonnées.
—— 276, line 19, *for* jour, *read* jours.
—— 284, line 8, *for* Zetes, *read* Zeteo.
—— 288, line 1, *for* dourcurs, *read* douceurs.

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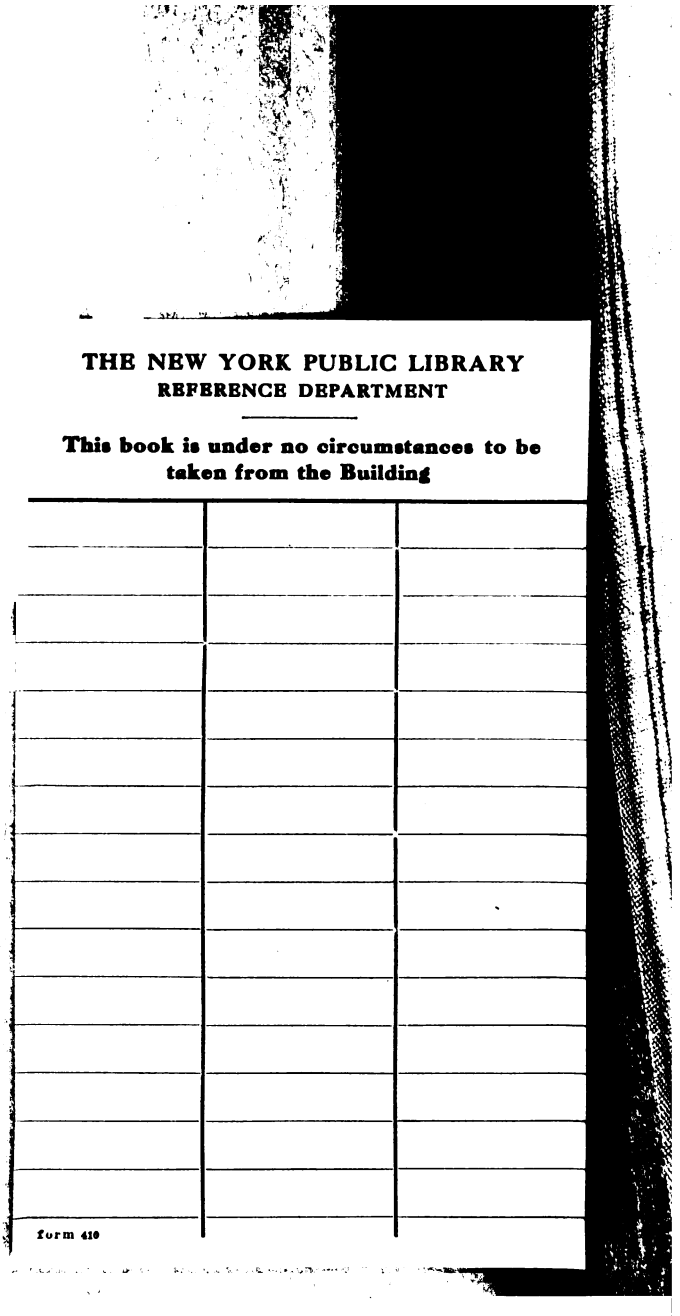

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